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THE

# COMFORTS

OF

# HUMAN LIFE;

OR

## SMILES AND LAUGHTER

OF

CHARLES CHEARFUL

AND MARTIN MERRYFELLOW.

---

IN SEVEN DIALOGUES.

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# ADVERTISEMENT.

IT is the pleasing apologue of TRAJANO BOCCALINI; that, "to a famous Critic "who presented all the faults of a celebrated poet to Apollo,—Apollo gave a "sack of undressed wheat,—desired the "Critic to separate the chaff from the "wheat,—and when the good man had, "with solemn and impatient industry, "done so, bestowed on him, the chaff "for his pains."

Nearly similar, I much suspect, is the fate of those who have peculiar quick-sightedness to discern the minute and evanescent miseries of human existence, that elude the grosser sense of the great body of mankind. He who can, with microscopic eye, discover freckles, rough-

ness, wrinkles, and squalid colours, on a face that is, to me bewitchingly beautiful, has only the misfortune to be frightened by ugliness where I am ravished with charms. He that is so nice a connoisseur in good-eating, as to find, that, of twenty dishes, of any one of which I eat with appetite, there is none so dressed as to be fit to be tasted by an Epicure of his nice skill, has, by this, only the misluck to make a bad dinner, while I, at the same table, enjoy a very good one. I heartily pity the poor man to whom the pleasure of a walk is quite spoiled, if but the smallest bit of gravel get into the foot of his boot. As many new pleasures as you will—if they be but genuine. But, let us leave it to the TESTYS and SENSITIVES of the world—and they are, God knows, a mighty number—to refine upon wretchedness—to inflame every scratch with a pin to the torture and danger of the breast

pierced with a poisoned arrow—to shrink from the coming storm before its visible approach—to enjoy, like a Highland seer, a *second sight*, that entertains the mind with none but visions of death and horror!—Ah! to me, ten thousand times dearer is the resolution of the vulgar proverb, "To LIVE, LOVE, AND LAUGH, ALL THE DAYS OF ONE'S LIFE!"

The reverend Author of the "MISERIES OF HUMAN LIFE," has evinced, in that popular work, a knowledge, admirably extensive and correct, of those minute incidents and circumstances which are, to numbers of men, the sources of occasional vexation, and which have actually power to render some very peevish or very feeble minds perpetually miserable.

One should judge, that he wished rather to make a sport of that host of petty vexations, than by mustering them, by disciplining them, by drawing them out

in rank and file, by improving the reach of their bayonets, and the level of their musketry, to render their invasion of human happiness more formidable and fatal.

Yet, if the former was his aim; he has, perhaps, to a certain degree, missed it. His book is illumined by many flashes of wit: and it unfolds, here and there, much of the irresistibly ludicrous imagery of Hogarthian humour. In the whole, however, his enumeration of the "Miseries of Human Life," is too much a plain, dry catalogue. The vein of irony is not sufficiently rich, nor sufficiently continuous. SWIFT, STERNE, or VOLTAIRE, would have hitched in—something slyly and oddly humorous, into the description of every particular Misery in the whole List, that should have made the burthen and point of the jest to turn against the folly of the person who could make a Misery to himself of such a circumstance

or incident,—something that should have transformed the nominal Misery into a Comfort, in the very moment of its exhibition. The reverend Author seems to be, almost all along, in sober earnest. I doubt not but his Catalogue must have made many more persons cry than laugh. I shrewdly suspect, that even the joys of his own existence have not been multiplied by his pains-taking and successful hunt after Miseries. LEMUEL GULLIVER found not even a *Brobdignaggian* more formidable than was a multitude of *Lilliputians*, surrounding him with bows not stouter than wheat-straws, and arrows not more powerful than sweet-briar prickles. And, it were not surprizing,—if, much in the same manner, persons who bear one or two of the greater ills of life, without being driven to wrong-headed despondency, should feel inclined to "*make their quietus*," under the "*siege* of minute

*troubles,"* which this author brings against them—even—" *with a bare bodkin!"*

It is for these reasons, that I have attempted to contrast this detail of MISERIES with an exposition of some of the "COMFORTS OF LIFE," gay or serious. It is said, that JOHN BULL is best pleased with those who take the greatest pains to convince him that he is Miserable,—that he is utterly undone.—Yet, one should hope, that a book of Comforts may be not unacceptable, as a second course or a dessert after a book of Miseries. The following pages will possibly be found to shew, that most of those incidents, from which the reverend Author extracts Miseries, must, when seen in their due light, and when met with the proper spirit, become absolutely matter of Comfort.

It is not denied, that, to him is due, as the first author of the general idea, a praise which the writer of this view of the

COMFORTS OF LIFE has no pretensions to claim.

I have naturally availed myself of the Public's previous acquaintance with Messieurs TESTY and SENSITIVE. I should be fortunate indeed, if my friend MERRYFELLOW and I, who am, after all, but amanuensis to the party, might share with them, the kindness of such as love occasionally to meditate, in a lounging pick-tooth humour, over the concerns of Human Life.

We detail but a small share of its Comforts. — When the reverend Author shall complete, according to his promise, the Catalogue of Miseries; we may then probably be induced to enlarge our display of Human Joys.

CHARLES CHEARFUL.

# COMFORTS OF HUMAN LIFE.

*Scene*—The Park.

## DIALOGUE THE FIRST.

*To* Samuel Sensitive *and* Timothy Testy, *enter* Charles Chearful *and* Martin Merryfellow.

*Merryfellow.*

HA! whom have we here? Peevish and Deplorable, arm in arm? The very phizzes of unappeasable Discontent and sneaking Despondency close together, like those of Philip and Mary on a shilling! Did you ever before see two such figures, *Chearful!* That meagre person, that withered brow, those ferret eyes, those cheeks shrivelled as a bit of parchment, forsaking the paste-board on the cover of an old book, that

short peaked nose, that pursed, pouting mouth, bespeak a mind that has deformed and worn out the frame it animates, by incessant toil, to extract from every subject of thought, continual matter of dissatisfaction. To what a mixed expression of sourness and effected wisdom he twists his features!

*Chearful.* But, how rueful the look of his companion! What a sunken eye! What a droop of the chin, What a lifeless stoop in the shoulders! With what languid, painful effort he drags his legs! He starts at that fly alighting on his hand, as if its touch were the bite of a scorpion. His comrade seems to inthral him with the power of an evil genius. He shrinks from every grasp of the other,—and shudders at his every word,—yet still cleaves to him.

*Merry.* Sure, I have seen that figure before. Is it not our old college-companion, SAMUEL SENSITIVE?——

*Chear.* Sensitive?—Ha! It is indeed! —And the other is, positively, Sensitive's constant chum at college, TIM TESTY.

*Merry.* Mr. Testy! Mr. Sensitive! Old friends! How have you fared these twenty years?

*Testy.* Very miserably! Most miserably! It seemed that nothing could be so bad as the plagues of the *life* we led at college. But, the world is the same, every where: a pitfal beset with snares; a wilderness of thorns, briars, thistles, nettles, and prickly pear trees, tearing one's flesh in the tenderest parts at every movement one makes, however slight; at the best, a bed of down bespread with cow-itch between the sheets: a ——

*Chear.* What afflictions have my old friends experienced? Have you been robbed of your fortunes? Have you been precipitated into unmerited infamy? Have your friends proved unfaithful, or your relations unkind? Have you been disappointed in love, or cuckolded in marriage? Have your children died by sudden illness? Or, have your mortal enemies undeservedly risen to wealth and honours, by those very events which were the springs of your misfortunes? I address you both: for, it is but

too plain, that good Mr. Sensitive does not find himself at all happier than Mr. Testy!

*Sensitive.* Indeed, I do not! it is but about twenty years since we were together at college, where you used so often to rally me on the refinement and delicacy of my feelings. But, I am, in spirits and constitution, full sixty years older. Every thing shakes my nerves to anguish, and writhes the tender sensibilities of my soul. No man of genius can find it otherwise in the world, I am always touched with miseries of my own, or trembling with sympathy in the distresses of others. When thunder does not stun my ears; they are affected still more disagreeably—by the grating, perhaps, of a fork on an earthen plate—or, by the murmurs of a company of amorous cats. Even the twang of a bit of leather on a rusty key, is enough to spoil a whole hogshead of the best old wine to the delicacy of my palate. The Sybarites, whose slumbers were broken by the rose-leaves folded under them, were coarse and torpid in their sensations of touch com-

pared to mine. I know not a single smell that is not, to my nostrils, mawkishly faint, or oppressively strong—no fragrance at once sufficiently fresh and sufficiently powerful. My eyes are but inlets to preceptions of disgust—Lights, shades, colours, forms, exhibit, all, but some slight vestiges of the essence of order and beauty, distorted, stained, mutilated, confounded, defaced, ever, to that degree, that it is more painful to contemplate such imperfection of beauty, than if all were but one waste of absolute privation and deformity. Such are the impressions to which my feelings have, from infancy, become continually more and more subject. This is the price at which Nature confers the true sensibilities of genius. To want them, were to be a brute: to know them, is to be superlatively wretched. Mr. Testy's skill in misery is, by the keen and wise direction of a penetrating and active understanding: Mine depends on the native constitution of my senses, spirits, and vital energies. His vigilance and discernment in the discovery of those nicer evils of life, which elude

the observation of common minds, continually rouse my sensibilities of misery, and, by their influence on me, prove their own delicacy and rectitude. My nature, so tremblingly alive to woe, gratifies him with evidence, that his theories of human wretchedness are not groundless. It is true, that neither of us has had any experience of those things, which are misfortunes even to the rudest and most vulgar of mankind. Our fortunes are entire. Our families are healthy, and, as the world deems it, prosperous. We are not sufferers by any of the common afflictions of humanity. Ours are the Sorrows of which only men of extraordinary discernment and feeling can become conscious.

*Merry*. Ha! ha! ha! Are not you the very Samuel Sensitive and Timothy Testy, whose Groans and Sighs, whose Dialogues of Miseries, whose whole muster-roll of ills, have lately awakened so many unlucky souls to a sense of woes, of which, but for your d—d good-natured kindness, they would have remained utterly unconscious? Ah! you old fools! Do you still cherish the odd

humours which made one of you so ridiculous, the other odious and ridiculous too, at college? You must go about, must you, with a murrain upon you—singing, with the cracked voices of a couple of maudlin ballad-singers, "*Let us all be unhappy to-*" "*gether!*"—What a couple of screech-owls! Had I not known you, I should have inclined to think, that the interlocutors in your dialogues were not in earnest; that they spoke merely to ridicule the peevish folly of those, who are never easy, unless they may be allowed to teaze us with a long tale of their ills. But, I know, that, since the interlocutors are no other than my old acquaintance—you could not but be in sober earnest. You mistake wrong headedness for genius—hypochondria for sensibility. You fancy, that the "*Muses have taught you to complain.*" But, never men were more mistaken. Some may laugh at you; some may sigh with you! But, to the laughers, you are merely butts: and they who sigh and groan over your dialogues, only sigh in concern for your folly.

*Chear.* Nay! now you are too severe— But our friends, by not resisting a bias of their tempers, which exposed them to so much raillery at college, have certainly taken a good deal from the comforts they might otherwise have had in life; and have, at last, made themselves much more conspicuous for absurd despondency and peevishness, than for refined discernment and genius.—How unwise to be for ever conjuring up *blue devils* before one! How much better to cull with the bee, honey and fragrance from every weed, than with the wasp, and other noxious insects, to extract poison from the essence of every flower? You, *Testy* and *Sensitive*, have, by your own accounts, had all those advantages which constitute prosperity and good fortune in the common estimation of mankind at large. *Merryfellow* and I, on the contrary, after a multitude of efforts, and a series of most provoking disappointments, find ourselves, each, not now in possession of more than will supply him with a clean shirt, every day, and a neck of mutton. But, we have such a sanguineness of tem-

per, that we find hope start constantly up to us, out of the bosom of disappointment. He possesses such a knack at detecting the gay and ridiculous, that he discovers matter of laughter in every incident, and in every appearance that comes before him. Nor is there an incident in my own fortune, or in that of others, in which I do not, without effort, and by the natural turn of my mind, find occasions of cheerfulness. In the town, we find the works of Art, and the charms of refined social life. In the country, are the beauties of Nature, and the reliefs of retirement. Riches give the luxuries of life. Poverty is favourable to its energies and its virtues. In travelling, we are amused with perpetual variety of exercise, society, views of nature, and intelligence of affairs. Residence quietly in one place is favourable to composure, ease, and continued meditation. Books are inoffensive companions of all hours—Conversation has, in it, an interest and a vivacity which books do not always give.

*Testy.* A truce with your common-place

details. Can you deny the truth of what we have stated in our Dialogues?

*Merry.* The terrible evils of your Dialogues are merely excitements to enliven pleasure by diversifying it. They are stimuli to awaken sensibility. They are mustard and Cayenne pepper to give the genuine seasoning to happiness.—What say you? Shall we compare our Catalogue of Comforts with your Mountain of Miseries?

*Sen.* Agreed.—My nerves are so worn out by sensations of refined distress, that I should almost wish to forfeit the privilege of genius, for the sake of relief from the agonies under which I am dying over again, every hour!—

*Tes.* And agreed—say I—Your disappointments in the comparison will only add another chapter to those Miseries of life which our Dialogues have enumerated.

*Chear.* Well, then! we four meet here, at the same hour, to-morrow.

*Merry.* We meet.

*Test.*
*Sen.* } Good morning, gentlemen.

*Merry.*
*Chear.* } Good morning.

# DIALOGUE THE SECOND.

## COMFORTS OF THE COUNTRY.

*Chearful, Merryfellow, Testy, and Sensitive.*

*Scene*—HYDE-PARK.

*Testy.*

YOU find us punctual to our appointment, gentlemen! I was impatient to hear what you could say in support of pretences to happiness, which I doubt not but I should find your emotions, in the course of any twenty-four hours, and in spite of any pains you might use for their concealment,—to belie.

*Merry.* Ah! Mr. Testy! we shall teach you to be happy, in spite of your teeth!

*Sen.* I have done nothing but dream of the relief you promised, since we separated

yesterday morning. Last night, in sleep, methought I saw my old friend Testy in the form of an enormous toad, feeding on my entrails, and instilling his poison while he fed,—till you, Chearful, in the figure of a Stork, as my dream represented it, came to destroy the filthy noxious reptile. At the effort, with which it seemed, that the stork made away with the toad, my sleep forsook me. Propitious be the omen!—No offence to my dear friend Testy.—But, it cannot be!—Genius can never see the calamities of life in another light than that I see them in!—Nor is it possible for my sensibilities to be deadened by any opiate, to the torpor of dulness!

*Chear.* Take courage, man! We shall quickly undeceive you. Your morbid sensibility shall be restored to soundness.

*Tes.* Come on! The pleasures of the country—if you please? In this rural scene —hid from every appearance of the town, as if we were at any remote distance from it—with so pleasing a diversity of wood, water, and verdure before us—while these animals play around—while the scene is so

unusually free from the approach of men—while the gentle, yet natural varieties of its level, deceive the eye and the fancy, and make it seem as if the whole were a landscape, in the creation of which, Art had no share,—what better subject can you chuse, than the *Comforts of the Country?*

*Merry.* Ay! comforts the country has—sufficient, it appears, to warm the imagination of old Testy himself—and to deceive him out of his croak of misery!—Ha! ha! ha!—

(C. 1.)

*Chear.* Its GENERAL COMFORTS transcend every praise with which even the raptures of sensibility and genius have yet extolled them. Its atmosphere gives lightness and activity to the play of the lungs which inhale it. It presents an endless variety of lights, shades, colours, and native forms, the most delightful to the heart and imagination of man. It salutes the nostrils with perpetual freshness and fragrance. Its air, its water, its genial sun-

shine flow round the surface of the body, in a manner the most refreshing and invigorating to the sense of touch. The ears are charmed with constant choruses of voices, giving all the possible varieties in the expressions of animal joy. Milk, fruits, animal food prepared with the utmost simplicity compatible with cleanliness, there afford the most exquisite gratifications to the taste. All is animated; and yet, with a diversity of animation, more interesting than if there were nothing before us but one vast multitude of human beings. How interesting the varieties of vegetable life, in the springing grass, the flowering shrubs, the leafy aspiring forest-trees, the yellowing corn, and the falling fruits! In the very breezes which agitate the air; in the rains which descend with refreshment and new animation to vegetative life; in the incessant transitions of heat; in the effusion of light from the Sun, and in all its varieties of refraction and reflection; as in the agitation of the waters of the rivers, the lakes, and the ocean; and in all the great changes of exterior nature; there is

an appearance of vital activity the most pleasing and elevating to the heart of man. What enchantment—to contemplate the diversities of animal character and manners, in the peasants, and their more enlightened masters, in the sheep, the cattle, the horses, the dogs, the beasts, and birds of game, the fishes of the lakes and rivers, the geese, turkies, pigeons, and all the fowls of the poultry-yard! How interesting the diversities of surface—hill, dale, vales, dells, knolls, craggy heights, wide expanding plains, and lofty masses of mountains—lakes, rivers, springs, brooks, pools, and cataracts! The diversions—hunting, fishing, horse-racing, and so many games of agility and strength,—are the most favourable to health and spirits. The very labours of the country—plowing, reaping, the keeping of sheep, the management of cattle, the attentions given to the progressive growth of cultivated vegetables, are delightful to all whose strength is not unnecessarily oppressed by them. All the energies of fancy acquire in the country their proper elasticity and force. The feel-

ings, the appetites, the passions, and all the vital powers gain, in the country, their proper tone. All the arts, whose practice and works are the most adapted to the genuine utilities of life, are to be seen in the country. In the country, we hold that converse with Nature, which insensibly elevates us into the presence of God!—

*Tes.* Rhapsody! declamation! the madness of poetry, without the inspiration!

*Merry.* Nay, you shall quickly hear somewhat much more provoking to a temper like your's. What say you to the Comforts of an EAST WIND *in a cold* APRIL DAY?—

*Sen.* An East Wind on a cold April Day! Oh! my poor nerves! Oh! my nerves!

(C. 2.)

*Merry.* Ay! an East wind in the month of April, however it may shake your nerves, is not so ill a wind, as not to blow good to many an one.—It rouses the frame which, at first, shivers under it, to a consciousness of lively sensibility. It awakens

torpor to vivacity. It furnishes a man with a portable barometer, which he can no more lose, than drop his own bones out of his body. It improves the charms of a flannel waistcoat, a Welsh wig, a warm great-coat, and a snug place at the chimney-corner. It gives, by deep-felt contrast, more genial freshness, and softness, and balmy fragrance to the breezes from the West. It presents, by its influence on the over-Sensitive and the Testy, appearances so ridiculously impatient and deplorable, that it is impossible for even sympathetic tenderness not to be roused by them to merriment. It teaches us to take timely care of our health, by convincing us—how easily that may be shaken. It heightens the eagerness of our expectation of the genuine Summer of June; and renders the delights of that month doubly dear to us when they arrive. Above all, it furnishes matter of condolence, carping, and complaint to multitudes of persons who cannot live without them, and whom Spring might, otherwise, deprive of subjects over which to murmur!

*Tes.* Deuce take such comforts! Do you think to insult me? I could have said ten times more against an east wind, than you have mentioned in its favour. Besides, I cannot well perceive, whether you be in jest or in earnest?

*Sen.* Oh! in earnest, most certainly! I find my spirits wonderfully revived by what he has represented. At his first mention of an east wind, I felt my bones to ache, as if all the witches in Lapland had been, in one assembly, muttering their prayers backwards, and sticking pins into a waxen image of me. My limbs and teeth shivered, as if by the attack of fifty tertian agues. But my heart is encouraged by Merryfellow's observations. I, for my own part, never do enjoy a snug seat in the chimney corner, so much as when a cold April east wind is blowing. And you Mr. Testy, are never half so pathetic and sarcastic in your complaints, nor ever complain with such an air of self-complacency, as when an east wind makes you to shiver and shrug your shoulders. —A crumb or two of comfort are better

than unappeasable vexation and perpetual agonies.

(C. 3.)

*Chear.* But the comforts of a RAINY DAY in the country,—especially if the rain begin to fall suddenly, after one has prepared for an excursion of pleasure, which is thus disappointed,—are among the true felicities of life.—You enjoy, perhaps for some hours, that charming flutter of solicitude between hope and fear, which constitutes the crisis of interest to the human mind. You now imagine that the rain may cease in time for your excursion,—now fear that it cannot,—now fancy that a particular part of the horizon begins to clear,—now see cloud thickening upon cloud, till you must hope no more. This is that charming suspense, for the sake of which men frequent the theatre, read books of history and of fiction, study the works of a Shakspeare and a Homer, crowd to coffee-houses to wait the arrival of the mails when the news of some eventful battle is expected. How cheap

is this dear suspense purchased, when one can be made to feel it all by no mightier cause than a few hours fall of rain! And then, when, by a small effort, the mind turns to within-doors amusement, how pleased it feels with itself for the triumph over its disappointment! The resources are most comic to which a family will, on such an occasion, apply themselves, in order to find at home what they cannot go to seek abroad. The very endeavour, even though awkward, and in part successless, excites general merriment. All sullenness is put out of countenance. The amusements multiply. The day seldom ends without having made every one happier, than was to have been expected from any out-of-doors diversion—To the serious and musing, a rainy day in the country is ever the favourite time for invention—to woo the muse, to produce improvements in the arts, to indulge those pensive walking reveries in which the tender and ingenuous mind takes peculiar delight! Such a day, too, reconciles one to many a book, which would otherwise

be thrown aside, as dry and musty. It gives new consequence to the games of *Hunt-the-Slipper* and *Blindman's-Buff*. It gives interest to a country dance, even with my lady's woman and the butler, not without the help of a chair or two, as dumb partners, to make out the set. It is more favourable to love, than even the meeting at a horse-race or a country-ball. It arms the eyes of maidens of thirty-five with new powers to kill. And it procures hearers to bed-rid grand-dames and story-telling grandfathers, when they would otherwise be left without a soul to smooth the pillow, or wheel about the great chair. It——

*Sen. (rubbing his hands, and looking up with great animation)* Oh! the delights of a rainy day! Oh! O the delights of a rainy dry! And then, how charming; in the country it never rains, but it pours! I am your convert, Mr. Chearful! Indeed, indeed, Mr. Testy! you and I are, like two old fools, entirely in the wrong!

*Tes.* Take the fool to yourself, Mr. Sensitive! I disclaim him. It is all buf-

foonery, man! 'Sdeath! it puts me mad to hear persons talk, who dare thus to make a sport of their own wretchedness! You might just as well take up Petrarch's mock praises of the *itch*, or repeat the Dutchman's eulogy on an *ague!* —Pray, my masters, cannot you as well reckon it among your RURAL FELICITIES, to be exposed in a country retirement, in which you had thought of finding only pastoral innocence, benevolence, simplicity, and virtue, to be there exposed to all the knaveries and tricks of vulgar malice and ill-humour, just as if you were hustled among a party of American sailors at Wapping, or of Irish labourers, on a Sunday evening, in St. Giles's?

(C. 4.)

*Merry.* Even from those KNAVERIES *and* IMPERTINENCIES *of* RUSTICS, it is easy enough to extract very comfortable amusement.

They spring from a vulgarity and a coarseness of sentiment, to which one is proud to feel one's self superior. They

display a want of honesty, which flatters one with the consciousness of superior virtue. Their low cunning betrays, ever, a narrowness of understanding, which enables him who defeats them to please himself in the knowledge of his superior wisdom.

They acquaint one, in the most effectual manner, with the humours, caprices, and selfishnesses of rustic character. They enlarge one's knowledge of human nature, and thus qualify one more and more for the practice of life.

They are merely the originals of those teizing incidents in rural life, of which the imitation is the most diverting, laughter-provoking part of the comic drama. He who laughs at *Tony Lumpkin* and mine host of the *Three Jolly Pigeons* on the stage, must surely laugh much more, when he meets the real characters in country life.

How charmingly, too, one's patience is exercised by intercourse with such characters! By such a rusticating probation, the mind is formed to a fortitude, with

which it can encounter the vexations of matrimony, the tumults of a rout, the bustle and clamours of the entrances to the theatres on a benefit night, the riots of the box lobby loungers, or even an insurrection among the gods in the upper galleries!

Besides, the wit, the cunning, and the malicious merriment of impudent and tricking rustics, are precisely those efforts of mind, which most Englishmen would sacrifice almost any thing to gain an acquaintance with. The selling of bargains; the grossly smutty jest; the mimickry of irremediable personal defects; the reproach on account of qualities implying nothing dishonourable; the archness of which malice and villany are the sole distinctions:—are not these the species of wit, humour, and cleverness, by which an Englishman is ever the most delighted, and the most ambitious to distinguish himself!

And then, what can be so insipid as the mere milk and water of country simplicity and innocence, unmixed and unvaried!

A dash of the pungent, the saltish, the sour, and the bitter, is ever necessary to give a due relish to the sweet, and to the mild. One would as soon prefer a bottle of mawkish capillaire for drinking, to a bottle of old port—or apple sauce for fish, to soy and anchovies, as be content, in the country, with the mere Golden Age manners of pastoral Phillips!

*Tes.* Well, gentlemen! much good may they do you—these joys which you prize so high,—of converse with rude and knavish rustics! I envy you them not. But I own I should be not a little diverted to see you both in the enjoyment of this favourite rural pleasure of yours! You might affect to appear happy! But, you would certainly be in the very situation of the German Baron at the feast of the ancients, in Peregrine Pickle, whose eyes were watering, his stomach in the throes of vomiting, and his whole frame almost in convulsions, by the effect of the physician's Lacedæmonian broth, at the very moment when he was struggling to praise it the most lavishly.

*Sen.* I know not very well, what to think of this sort of pleasure. I should imagine it a genuine one. But I fear I shall never be able to brace up my nerves to the enjoyment of it.

*Tes.* *(with a sneer)* Pray, Mr. Chearful, have you not been able to find out a Comfort, "in the attempt to LAY *out one's* "PLEASURE GROUNDS, on a plan which "your ornamental gardener and his la-"bourers entirely defeat, in carrying it "into effect?" or "in labouring to IM-"PROVE *your breeds of* SHEEP *and* CATTLE "at a similar prodigality of expense, and "with equally disappointment?"

(C. 5.)

*Chear.* I have, indeed!—The pleasure of forming your plan, of anticipating your future groves, belts, clumps, lawns, knolls, ruins, trickling rills, foaming cascades, winding walks, and basons expanding into artificial lakes, no mortal can deprive you of. You possess it in spite of both ornamental gardener and obstinate blockhead labourers. It is a pleasure of imagina-

tion—in it's nature one of the most exquisite.

How delightful to expend one's money upon a design in any of the arts of refinement and genius, which is of one's own contrivance! The more capriciously singular and fantastic the design, so much the more does its author usually delight to lavish a boundless expense in carrying it into effect. What is sarcastically termed this or that man's FOLLY, is commonly that which it has been the very pride and charm of his life to create.

There is a pleasure, which much more than counterbalances the vexation, when one's designs in ornamental gardening appear to be frustrated, only because the genius of every person one can employ, is so exceedingly below one's own, as to be incapable to carry them into effect. It is the very consummation of pride, to find yourself thus without a second and without a judge!

But, the greatest felicity of all is, that the disappointment of such a design, by means of which its author is innocent,

becomes his defence against the censures, to which its success might have exposed him. A gentleman can insist, that it would have been, not a *Folly*, but a *Paradise*, which his manager and workmen have hindered from being either the one or the other. He can still lead his visitors over his bogs, crags, and quagmires; and, with the prophetic eye of taste, explain their wonderous *capabilities*. He can renew his complaints perpetually, that designs so noble were defeated so miserably! And, while he prepares new funds, he can have the delight of meditating plans much more magnificent!

(C. 6.)

*Merry*. And, for successless attempts to improve the breeds of cattle,—cannot the disappointed improver console himself, as did old Mr. *Shandy*, when the mare, from which he expected a fine pad, produced a mule?—" See, Obadiah, what " you have done!"—" It was not I that " did it, please your honour!"—" How

"do I know that?"—with a look and a laugh of triumph.

(C. 7.)

*Tes.* But, I defy you to enjoy amusement in the most enchanting rural walk in England, if your toes be covered with corns, your shoes tight, and your feet overheated.

*Chear.* Why not? It is not only when we are quite free from pain, that we enjoy comfort. To be in that condition is rarely, if ever, the lot of man. But we are so constituted, as to be capable of enjoyment whenever our sensations or sentiments of pleasure are more numerous and more intense than those which affect us with pain. If one's corns give more of pain than one derives of pleasure from the views of nature, the society, the glow of energetic activity, which constitute the charms of the walk; why should not one instantly stop, release the imprisoned foot, and enjoy that repose which becomes peculiarly pleasing the moment any one begins to find activity uneasy? Now, the

pinching of the shoes—the shooting pain of the corns—what are they but useful stimuli to excite the walker to a keener enjoyment of the pleasures before him?

Besides, how many little sarcastic jokes does not such a condition of the foot naturally prompt the walker's wit to? The *fancy* is the most fertile in the invention of incidents, sentiments, and imagery of grandeur and beauty, at those times when one's mind feels none of those which are called the *petty vexations* of life. On the contrary, the *wit* is the readiest and brightest, when those very teizing vexations are perpetually striking fire from its edge. And who would not be a *wit*, at so trivial a charge as that of suffering a little by a *corn* and a tight shoe?

Such a condition of the foot, too, affords a good occasion of paying a gallant and liberal compliment to one's company, whether one proclaim or bravely hide one's sufferings in the *extremities*!

And the consciousness of having, in one instance, conquered pain, arms a man with new fortitude to keep it, on future

occasions, more at a distance from intermeddling in his pleasures.

*Merry.* So, your advice is, Mr. Chearful——

*Tu ne cede* cornu;
*Sed, contra* audentior ito.

*Chear.* Most certainly.

(C. 8.)

*Sen.* But "the torment of *gravel in* "*the boot*, which you have endured till it "becomes absolutely intolerable."

*Merry.* 'Tis nothing. Take off your boot. Use your hands——

"Hi motus animorum, et hæc certamina tanta,
"*Exigui jactu pulveris*, compressa, quiescent."

The pleasure of finding that one can so easily rid one's self of such an annoyance, much more than compensates for the slight uneasiness it has given.

(C. 9.)

*Tes.* "Newspapers delayed—till their intelligence is old?"

*Merry.* A vexation annihilated, trans-

muted into a comfort—by the charming suspense it creates—by the anticipation it allows—by the inventive conjectures to which, in the interval of delay, it pushes the mind!

(C. 10.)

*Tes.* "Following a slow cart, on horse-"back, through a long and narrow lane?"

*Chear.* Charming opportunity—to mark narrowly the produce, culture, and beauties of the scenery on either hand—to watch the flittings of the clouds on the sky above—to distinguish the limits of the horizon around—to view the perpetually varied colouring with which the rays of the setting sun are reflected from the clouds, and diffused, with faint lustre, over the plains and mountains—to listen to the mingled noises of the joy, vexation, and other natural sounds of men and other animals, arising from the hamlets, villages, and farms—to mark the rising smoke, with whose ascent so many pleasing ideas are naturally associated—to suffer the mind to glide insensibly into that stream of reverie

into which such a concurrence of objects tends naturally to lead it!

(C. 11.)

*Sen.* "A sluggish attempt to amuse
" yourself by working in your garden,
" when it is against your feelings to make
" an effort, to which good sense power-
" fully induces you—what comfort is in
" this?"—

*Merry.* A great deal of comfort.—It is a comfort that never fails of pleasing the mind—when it makes an effort to submit inclination to duty.

The consciousness of having made such an effort, inspirits the heart to continue it. Its continuance augments the pleasure. The energies of the body are enlivened by sympathy with those of the mind. The first listlessness is shaken off. And, in the end, the working in the garden proceeds with a conscious triumph of activity over spleen and langour, than which nothing can well be more grateful.

So ridiculously wrong, Mr. Testy, are you and Mr. Sensitive in your selection of

the themes of Misery in your Dialogues—that there is not one of your Miseries, but, like this, must, to every mind free from morbid peevishness and irritability, prove a source of happiness.

*Tes.* "But, were you a farmer, Mr. "Merryfellow, and had your hay deluged "with rain, just when you had got it "quite dry enough to be taken in, and "had made all the requisite preparations "for that work;—should you feel so very "comfortable?"—

(C. 12.)

*Merry.* Assuredly, I should not feel uncomfortable.—I should laugh at such an example of the vanity of human hopes and human preparations. I should satisfy myself with dismissing my work-people to suitable within-door tasks. I should remember, that—*Non semper imbres manant.*—And, if I had your turn of mind, Mr. Testy, I should, no doubt, please myself with the reflexion, that—if the hay-harvest prove bad, hay will but be, in proportion so much the dearer;—and that,

the more my crop is spoiled, so much the more must my gains be enhanced!

*Sen.* Very well! Mr. Merryfellow—Very well, indeed! You give new life to my heart! *Do, lubens, manus!* I am convinced. I am satisfied, that almost every one of our fancied Miseries is to you, and may become to me, a source of pure and genuine joy!

(C. 13.)

*Tes.* Have you, Chearful or Merryfellow, ever, in the country, met the vexation of receiving a parcel of tenants at an annual dinner, when they pay their rents, urge their grievances, and make their numberless requests—just before you leave the country on your return to town for the season? Have you found it possible to take pleasure in the awkward bashfulness of some of them—the rude impudence of others—the fulsome flatteries of a third party—the growlings and coarse sarcasms of a fourth—their retchings and spittings, their management of knives, forks, spoons, so filthily at cross-purposes—the voracious

rapacity of their eating—the eagerness of their drinking—their conspicuous jealousies of one another—their mutual quarrels, which even your presence cannot restrain—and, at last, the general intoxication which lays some senseless and speechless under the table, sets others to boxing, sends some off on horseback, with a haste and an incapacity of steadiness that threaten to break their necks by the way?

*Chear.* Neither Mr. Merryfellow, nor myself is so opulent as to have ever had opportunity to experience, in his own person, the vexations, if they be not rather amusements, of the scene you describe.

*Merry.* But, I have been often present while my excellent friend —— met his tenants, on such an annual day of business as Mr. Testy mentions,—and entertained them at a farewel dinner, before his departure for town.

He accounts it ever the happiest day he spends in the country. The kindness of his manner conciliates their general good-will. Its dignity represses the out-breakings of rustic insolence. A bashfulness,

an esteem, a modesty pervade their whole conduct, which render its awkwardness and rusticity rather interesting than disagreeable. To such a landlord, there are no angry complaints to be made. His stewards commit no mischievous abuses. Mutual mistakes are no sooner explained, than they are corrected. The rack-rents are moderate: And, none are received, as tenants on his estates, but persons of probity, industry, and adequate capital. Hence, the payments are always punctual. Not a tenant fears the day of payment. Not one comes empty-handed. There are, among them, no illiberal jealousies. They meet round their landlord's table, as if they were all children of the same family. They behave with none of that grossness and indelicacy which might, in other circumstances, be expected from persons of their condition. They listen, with deference, when he addresses them. They scarce speak, but to answer his questions, or to pursue a train of conversation which he wishes to lead them into. They neither eat nor drink with intemperance. Though

willing to enjoy his society to the last minute to which they can suppose that their presence will not be intrusion; yet they leave him as soon as he can have any inclination to see them retire. The simplicity of their manners, the characteristic diversities of their elocution and converse, tender enquiries after their absent wives and families, the discussion of subjects in the practice of husbandry, gentle unassuming examinations into the industry and morals of the neighbourhood, interest his mind, while he holds them in convivial society at his table.—Such a day never ends, without having made them all reciprocally dearer to one another.

*Tes.* Enough of the Country.—But, should you find it pleasant to come suddenly to town, in the promiscuous company, and indifferent accommodation, of a mail-coach?

(C. 3.)

*Chear.* Why not? A mail-coach gives the comfort of prompt and safe conveyance.

It is quicker and more safe than private carriages can, in general, be.

It gives you the benefit and honour of early rising.

It shakes one into habits of subordination and obedience, by subjecting you, for the journey, to the command, in fact, of the mail-coach driver and his horses.

It teaches temperance, by allowing you but a few minutes in which to swallow a few mouthfuls of ill-dressed dinner, a cup or two of milk and water, with a slice of dirty bread and butter for a breakfast, and perhaps, at a different hour, a few glasses of log-wood water, instead of port-wine.

It instructs us, not to be squeamishly over delicate in favour of sweet odours. Crammed up in a mail-coach, with males and females of every diversity of years, health, and condition, we necessarily learn fortitude, in the exercise of all our senses, but especially the sense of smell.

It affords one occasion to learn to sit backward in a coach.

It brings us into an acquaintance with

manners and characters, interesting by their comic humour and dramatic effect, which it would be difficult for most persons to gain a knowledge of, in any other circumstances.

It yields such opportunity of recovering damages for the fracture of a leg, or the dislocation of a shoulder, as it would be impossible to obtain, if one met with a similar accident from his own carriage.

If the weather be fair—and you dare venture yourself among the plebeians on the top of the coach—you may enjoy the prospect of the circumjacent scenery, with higher satisfaction, than it is easy to obtain from any other advantage for the survey of rural landscapes.

And when, at last, you alight at HATCHETT's in Piccadilly—how agreeable to be warned by the crowd and bustle at the doors, by the ready civility of the waiters, by the elegant fitting up of the coffee-rooms, by the excellence of the entertainment, and by the enormous dearness of every thing,—that you are, now in London!

*Sen.* In truth, my dear old friends, I cannot but like your excursion to the country, much more than those, of which the results are exhibited in one of the Dialogues between Mr. Testy and myself. But, there was, perhaps, a good deal of *Comfort* in our *Miseries*: And I am inclined to suspect, that there may be *Misery* in your *Comforts*. Yet, what with laughing at what are to others, calamities,—what with discovering grounds of Comfort, which tempers like mine and Testy's are not forward to discern,—you certainly contrive to make human life appear much less unhappy in the Country, than I had, hitherto, conceived it to be.

*Tes.* Enough of all this, for the present.—It is, now, late in the morning.—Let us separate.—To morrow, I shall be glad to hear what you have to say of London.

*Chear.* I will, with all my heart, give you the meeting. You, Mr. Testy, whatever you may sometimes endeavour to persuade yourself, are already, as appears from your habits of life, and your dislike of

the country, not a little partial to London. You shall find that, in favour of its Comforts, we have at least not less to say, than we have already represented in commendation of the beauties and pleasures of the Country. Shall we meet here, at the same hour, to-morrow morning?

*Sen.* No;—rather do me the favour to make my library at my house in St. James's Square, the scene of our meeting and conversation.

*Chear.—Merry.* Willingly.

*Tes.* I have no objection. There was something congenial between this scene and the subject of our conversation of to-day, which rendered it peculiarly proper for us to meet, on this occasion, in this charming Park. Speaking of the Comforts of London, we may just as well remain within doors.—

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# DIALOGUE THE THIRD.

## COMFORTS OF LONDON.

*Testy, Sensitive, Chearful, and Merryfellow.*

*Scene—Sensitive's House in St. James's-Square.*

*Sensitive.*

WELCOME, gentlemen! I am glad to find you, all, punctual to your appointment. I was, myself, impatient to see you. I have not slept sounder these twenty years, nor had more pleasant dreams, than last night. When I went to bed, I fell, almost instantly, into a deep, refreshing sleep. Towards the dawn, I awoke, in a pleasing state of the spirits. After reflecting on what passed in our conversation of yesterday, I turned my thoughts, for some mi-

nutes, on what I was to expect to-day. I dropped asleep, again. Asleep, I soon imagined myself in a Paradise, in which all was abundance, beauty, chearfulness, constancy, and gay good-humour. Methought, there was no subject of vexation known in that spacious, rural scene, but such things as—getting a little sand in the boot in walking—a pinch of snuff scattered from the fingers by the wind, and getting partly into the eyes—now and then an unseasonable ring of bells—and other such embryo miseries, as made the burthen of the famous rural Dialogue between Testy and myself. But, they seemed not miseries. They were occasions of gaiety, springs of exertion, topics of converse, points upon which the mutual sympathies of all, were lightly and most agreeably exercised.

*Tes.* Don't fancy, Mr. Sensitive, that I am unwilling to see you deceived into a dream of vain felicity. Make yourself as happy as you can. Sacrifice your senses and your reason to the vainest of delusions. Depart to Fairy-land, if you can.—

Allow Chearful and Merryfellow to make you—now the butt of their irony and laughter—now, the dupe of their serious, but fictitious pretences.—The only consequence will be, that you shall, in the end, find yourself ten times more wretched than ever. If your dreams of last night placed you in a fool's Paradise;—be assured, that the result of our conversation of this morning, must infallibly be, to throw you, in your dreams of to-night, into the confusion of Milton's chaos, or into St. Patrick's purgatory!

*Merry.* No, no! London presents an assemblage of all that can be contributed to the welfare of social life, by the art and genius of man, operating upon the richest abundance of the bounties of Providence!

(C. 1.)

It is the very Paradise of SENSUAL enjoyment. The taste, the touch, the smell, the ear, the eye, have, in London, every thing supplied, as readily, as by the power

of the wishing-cap of Fortunatus, that can give them, severally, delight.

To the TASTE, here are provided, from every region of the earth, all the agreeable varieties and combinations of sweet, salt, acid, bitter, pungent, freshly cool, or not unpleasingly warm. Every species of animal food is to be had, in unrivalled perfection, in the London markets. The gardens of the Mahometan Paradise, the happy vale of Abyssinia out of which Rasselas eloped into the world, have not a richer variety of flowers and fruits, than presents itself to the happy visitants of Covent-Garden. Every pickle-shop teems with all the spices of the East, and with ten thousand combinations and natural varieties of sauces, seasonings, and grateful stimuli, more than the East ever knew. Every tea-shop is rich with the most fragrant and delicious luxuries of the West. The wine-merchant's cellars are filled with every delicious or exhilarating liquor, native or factitious. The confectioner refreshes and gratifies your appetite with ices, pampers it with conserves, provokes it

with cherry-brandy.—The eating-house, the coffee-house, the tavern, accommodate us with *eatables* and *drinkables*, with a promptitude and a tempting facility, much like those of the far-famed *Lubberland*, where pheasants, ducks, and geese, fly upon your plate, ready-dressed; and roasted pigs and shoulders of mutton and sirloins of beef run about, with the knife and fork in them—crying, "*Come, eat me! Come, eat me!*"

The SMELL is not less gratified, in London, than the Taste. Every drawing-room is filled with flower-pots diffusing odours, richer than the spicy gales wafted from Arabia the Happy.—Every maiden breathes from her lips, a delicacy and freshness, which the want of an equally scrupulous care of cleanliness, elsewhere, denies even to virgin beauty. Matrons and antiquated Spinsters scarce ever come abroad, but under clouds of *attar* of roses.—The strong smells of the kitchen are removed from access to the nostrils of the occupiers of the dining-room. The tables are so covered, that the odours

of the meats never arise so strong as to annoy the sense. The desert presents that assemblage of fruits of which the smells may be the most happily associated together. The fragrance of green tea awaits your descent into the breakfast-room in the morning. The grateful and lively steams of coffee salute you in the evening. The *Patent Water Closet* removes those smells which are, above all others, the most unpleasant. The flow of the Thames gives an agitation to the air, by which, all fumes noxious to the smell, which may arise, are continually dissipated. Every shop exhibits linens, silks, cloths, articles of furniture, all fresh and fragrant as the bean-flower or the new-blown rose. Even the cropped hair of the Bond-street beau, is converted, as it were, into a bunch of wool or cotton, the depository of essential oil of lemons, bergamot, or oil of lavender!

To the TOUCH, what delicate gratifications does not London provide! The finest linens; the softest silks; the most agreeable to the feeling, of thetextures which Hosiery can frame of the wools of Cach-

emire, Angola, Spain, Shetland, or England; the most delicate fabrics of cotton, the skins of deer, dogs, chickens, lambs, tanned into the softest material that can be brought in contact with the skin; form here our clothing—our clothing, which, of all things, acts upon the skin and upon the organs of touch the most constantly. The shops in every street present them in immense profusion. As to other things—scarce a wind is suffered to visit the face too rudely. The coach, the chariot, the landau, the barouche, the curricle, are provided, to render out-of-doors conveyance the gentlest and the least fatiguing that can be imagined. What care is used, to make the pavement the most convenient for the movement of carriages! What attention to keep the foot-walks easy, clean, and dry, for the accommodation of foot-passengers! Within the houses,—how clean and dry every floor and passage! How soft and warm the carpets! How smooth the tables! How commodious the chairs! How luxuriously soft the beds!—Go to the places of public amusement—the entrances, the

lobbies, the seats, the staircases, present, all, the greatest convenience imaginable to the limbs, the hands, the feet, and to every part of the body, that is brought into exercise, in entering those places, or remaining in them.—How easy the conveyance in boats upon the Thames! How happily adapted the cold and hot baths, to refresh and renovate the sensibilities of the skin! How charming the diversities of gratification and excitement which the manners of this metropolis supply, to satisfy even the demands of vice for the highest and last convulsive straining of the general sensibility of the frame by the Touch!

What charms the EARS, like that confusion of cries and sounds of all sorts, which fill the streets of London! *Goldsmith*, in his *Deserted Village*, has well described the confusion of sounds rising, in an evening, from a scene of rural activity and merriment, as peculiarly delightful to the ear and heart of the man of sensibility. But, what is the rustic confusion of sounds which he so interestingly mentions, to that infinitely more diversified assemblage of

sharps and flats, concords and discords, fortes and pianos, basses, counters, and tenors, which meet the ear, in the mingled noises of the streets of London! It is but as the lute to the Orchestrino! as the duet of two rustic maidens at their spinning wheels, to the grand performances at a Winchester Musick-meeting, or at a Commemoration of Handel!—The voices of English women, as they are heard, in their liveliest vivacity, and their most polished culture, in London, are the sweetest music to the ear of man. How delectable that entertainment, which the theatres offer to the sense of hearing—the more delectable to the ear, perhaps—because their representations sometimes yield only sounds which do not reach the heart! How delightful the murmuring noises on the Royal Exchange, any day between three and four o'clock in an afternoon! Who is not charmed with the thunders of House of Commons eloquence—or with the mimic thunders of the British Forum—with the admirable *blatteration* of a Common-Councilman or Livery Orator, on the Hustings

at Guildhall!—or, with the still more consummate and interesting perfection of eloquence and sweet sounds, that distinguishes a contest between a couple of fishwomen at Billingsgate! The Opera representations at the King's Theatre present an enchantment of harmony and melody, such as is not to be heard elsewhere. How grand and interesting to the ear—the combination of instruments and voices in the gardens at Vauxhall!

But, the Sight is even much more interestingly entertained in London, than any of the other senses. Walk out into the st eets—you behold here, all the triumphs of Art—Houses of the most convenient structure, and the most ingenious application to the use of dwelling—Carriages the most splendid and elegant—Horses, such as are not, in equal numbers and perfection of form, to be seen elsewhere in the world—Multitudes of men the most manly forms, and women the most beautiful on earth—An assemblage of streets, houses, public buildings, squares, parks, a river, ponds, fountains, in all, the most

admirable that have been ever exhibited together! Enter the houses and public halls—the interior arrangement shews a disposition of apartments the most suitable for the admission of light, coloured in a manner the most inoffensive and grateful to the eyes!—The paintings, the furniture, present forms and colours the most agreeable to the eyes, that it is possible for objects of such accommodation to become.—And then—how charming to see the lions! how delightful to ascend the monument! how interesting, a walk in the Park! how agreeable to visit the palaces, the collections of paintings, the monuments of sculpture, the public libraries, the halls of commerce, the wharfs, the docks, the forests of masts in the river, the light boats in continual movement upon it! what so pleasing to the eyes, as that immense variety of commodities which meets the view at the doors and windows of the shops from the Exchange to Charing Cross! How convenient the assistances to the sight, provided by so many opticians and occulists, the most eminent in the world!

*Chear.* The SOCIAL, *the* INTELLECTUAL COMFORTS *of* LONDON are infinitely more valuable, than those which address themselves to the Senses merely.

You can contemplate, here, all the diversity of Human Characters and Manners. In the streets, in the coffee-houses, in the Exchange, and other great market places, at all the great theatres of public amusement, in this metropolis, we meet, as it were, men of every nation, tongue, and kindred under Heaven. Nothing so engages human curiosity, sympathy, hope, and fear, as the contemplation of the diversities of human Character. In the immense assemblage of these diversities which London presents, it has, therefore, a charm of unrivalled power to exercise an animating, gladdening influence on the heart of man.

Not only the exterior and superficial distinctions of character and appearance are more easily to be contemplated in London than elsewhere. The radical, permanent distinctions of humour, passion, and intellect, are, here, the most conveniently

studed. Mark the emotions of the spectators at our theatres; view the scenes of vulgar contention, which occur in the streets; enter the Courts of Justice, and mark the play of character and passions; attend the scenes of public business; listen to the Debates in the great legislative Courts of the Nation; enter into the meetings of private society; visit the hospitals and the prisons; observe some of those many unfortunate accidents which occur continually in the course of trade, labour, and pleasurable activity:—You shall have, in these, a school of human nature and of general manners, the interest and the charm of which are as unrivalled as the instruction that they afford.

The FORTUNES of life are illustrated in London, in a manner perhaps still more interesting. The rich to-day is poor to-morrow. The great man is, before your eyes, degraded: The mean is suddenly exalted: Vigorous life is extinguished in sudden death: Recoveries from the gates of death, the most extraordinary, are continually surprizing our observation, and ma-

nifesting a new power of human art over the misfortunes and infirmities of nature: In the streets, on the river, on the Stock-Exchange, in the transactions of the Merchants, in the successions of great families, every variety of human fate, presents itself to our eyes.—It is not merely good fortune that interests and charms our feelings. Nothing charms, engages, and suspends our sympathies, more than those incidents of which it is expressively said—

> " Sunt lacrymæ, rerum, et mentem, mortalia,
> " tangunt."—

LONDON is the favourite seat of that intelligence and those FINE ARTS which are the pride of man, and which yield the greater proportion of the rational pleasure of which his mind is susceptible. Its libraries, its schools, its public institutions for instruction, the assemblies for conversation at the houses of men of distinction and liberal curiosity, the Lectures read here upon subjects in every department of knowledge or scientific art, yield a nourishment to the intellect, the most various and

the richest that it can enjoy. London is the seat of a traffic in literary publications, and the centre of a general correspondence, by which its inhabitants are enabled to drink of every spring of knowledge, the moment its waters burst into the light. Its coffee-houses become much rather schools of intelligence than butteries of mere sensual refreshment. Its Post-office is a grand central bason, *incessantly receiving* and distributing the Streams of Knowledge. Its *theatres* associate almost all the other Fine Arts with the constant culture of the most airy and interesting branch of our classic literature. Its Houses of Parliament, its Courts of Justice, its Churches, are the best and most interesting schools of political and legislative science, of the rules of distributive justice, of the truths of religion, and of the principles of morality throughout all their applications.

It teems with the works of the MECHANIC ARTS. These are exercised here, in a refinement and ingenuity which have

never been excelled elsewhere. It is ever pleasing not less than instructive to contemplate the efforts of ingenious industry. Enter the manufactures dispersed throughout London,—and in its environs:—and you shall find every where the active practice of those Arts in their highest perfection, which do not elsewhere exist but in a ruder and inferior state. All the elegancies of foreign Art are imported into it; and no sooner imported, than, if liked, they are imitated and excelled by its native artisans. Its quays exhibit, in the goods there continually laden and unladen, all the triumph and the various magnificence of its Arts. The new inventions brought from time to time, into practice in it, are more in number than those afforded by all the other countries of Europe together. You may wander from work-shop to work-shop, day after day, and find ever new matter of amusement the most instructive!

Such are some of the GENERAL COMFORTS which London presents for the solace of human life. It gives all the interesting glow of the passions—all the af-

fecting vicissitudes of fortune—all the energies of intellect—all the endless diversity of the bounties of nature, accommodated by ingenious Art to the best utilities of human existence. It exhibits that turmoil of life, that ferment of activity, that mixture of the projects, the successes, the animated enjoyments, the virtues, the vices, the solicitudes, the sufferings, that association of pleasures sensual and intellectual, in which it is the delight of the human heart, by sympathy or by personal interests, to take a part.

*Tes.* What are these general Comforts, but a mountain of Miseries?

*Merry.* Mountain of Miseries? Pray, Mr. Testy!—Single out some of them!

(C. 2.)

' *Tes.* Single out! What can be a greater Misery than to face the dust and dirt of the roads, the crowding of waggons, the rushings, the encounters, the ruins of coaches, the march of bullocks, drays, and market-women, the foggy atmosphere op-

pressing the lungs almost to suffocation, the smoke, the smells, the jolting on the stones, and all the etcætera of concomitant ills, which muster against a stranger at his first access to this Babylon of human crimes, follies, and misfortunes?

*Merry.* Amazing ills, no doubt! The bustle of industry and civilized life, a Misery to the spectator when he first beholds it!—What young beauty, coming to town, for the first time, to try the power of her form and her eyes at Court, and in the other grand scenes of fashionable resort, ever found such distresses as you figure to yourself in the entrance to London?

What young heir, arriving, for the first time, to pass a winter amid the bustle and broil of London amusements and pleasures, ever failed of finding a charm exhilarating to his spirits, in those objects of obstruction, distress, and terror, over which your imagination is so deeply afflicted?

What statesman, hastening to London to assert the importance of his influence and talents, ever suffered himself to be an-

noyed by the coaches he met?—or snuffed the smoke, without feeling it to enliven his brain more than the best Strasburgh? or respired the air of London from his lungs, without finding it to affect him with sensations more extatic than the famous transport-giving gas of the chemist can communicate?

What matron, a leader of the fashion,—weary of Christmas festivity in the country,—tired of rural society, impatient to lead, to shine, to dazzle, to blaze,—hopeful to gain prodigious sums by gaming, to set the fashion of routes, assemblies, theatres, masquerades,—studious to get by intrigue, great matches for her daughters,—resolved to outshine every rival in the splendour of horses, carriages, and dashing smartness of dress in the ring in Hyde-Park—What matron, what titled dame of fashion, entering London, with such views, and after a tedious rustication—ever felt aught but the liveliest joy, when she arrived within the perception of those genuine marks which you enumerate, that she entered the very immediate accesses to the scene

of her expected glories, successes, and joys?

The gardener, bringing his produce to market, the nearer he approaches to London and to the market, is but so much the more pleased.—The shopkeeper, returning from Brighton, or any other favourite watering place, is delighted when he arrives again within the sound of Bow-bells, and meets all those obstacles and that confusion which bespeak the town to be full.—The merchant from the country, coming to make sales and purchases from which he expects vast profits, enters London in an eagerness of activity and satisfaction which renders all the smells, obstructions, and feelings of which you complain, the most grateful to his heart.

No! no!—It is but to the Testy, to the morbidly Sensitive, to those whose susceptibilities of joy are exhausted, that your fancied *disagreeables*, in the immediate approach to London, do not, by association, if not by direct natural effect, give sentiments of joy. They can do much to minister to a mind diseased—though they

have not precisely the Quack physician's power of curing the incurable—though they cannot force comfort in upon a mind in which the corresponding sensibilities have been entirely destroyed. Is it so surprizing, that he who has long endeavoured to persuade himself, that the odour of a rose is the fœtor of assa-fœtida, should, at last, sink into an hypochondria, by which the imagination shall entirely pervert the Sense?

*Sen.* But, the sight of accidents of wickedness, embarrassment, or personal injury in the streets—what comfort is it possible to extract from this? Or, how venture along the streets of London at all, without encountering such? Or, how, indeed, view them, without enduring all the agonies that whether self-love or philanthropy can inflict?

(C. 3.)

*Chear.* Be not so hasty in unpleasant conclusions.

A coach breaks down; the company within, are thrown out: one has a leg

broken, another an arm dislocated, a third, a fine woman, her face bruised and irrecoverably disfigured. A bustle ensues. You approach at the moment of tumult and distress—and are a spectator of the whole! And is there no comfort, think you, to be extracted from the sight? It affords, in truth, a great deal of comfort.—One feels an instinctive sentiment of satisfaction, that the misfortune is not one's own.—Even the most tenderly beneficent cannot but indulge some complacent emotion of emulation or pride, at sight of any thing, that in any respect, humbles another, if but for a moment, beneath ourselves.—The surprize of the accident interests our curiosity.—What is painful and piteous in it, to the sufferers, soothes our hearts with that self-approbation which ever accompanies the consciousness of virtuous sensibility. We acquire from the sight of the fear, suffering, weakness, and fortitude, a new acquaintance with their varied imagery, by which our knowledge of human character and fortunes is necessarily enlarged.—There is ever something ludicrously comic

that intermingles itself with the seriousness and the distress of such a scene:—the rueful looks and odd exclamations of the coachman, the awkwardness of the situations in which the persons fall, the insensibility of some part of the surrounding mob, the droll expressions of sympathy which escape from others of them, the hurry and confusion in which they interpose to give their assistance!——Consider, also, what a subject of conversation the accident affords to him who was an eye-witness of it, for all the rest of the day! What consequence does it not give him in every coffee-house or private company, in which he tells the tale? If he be a person otherwise of barren intellect, and slender powers of converse—it rouses him, even for a day or two, to all the importance of a Genius and an Orator—proud and unexpected elevation!

*Tes.* Admirable! Admirable! I must confess, that you have made it out very well! This is a pleasure quite to my own heart. I think that I could, indeed, at any time, participate with you, in this comfort.

(C. 4.)

*Chear.* What should you think of the comfort of going to the theatre on the first night of a new play or of a performer of extraordinary fame and expectation,—a SIDDONS, a KEMBLE, a COOKE, or a BETTY!—then, finding—that you have come too late—that all the avenues leading to the theatre are crowded so as to render access impossible—or after forcing your way in for a certain length, and being squeezed into the slenderest dimensions of a weasel, being at last fixed, so as to be incapable either to advance or retreat, and all but crushed absolutely to death before the crowd begins to disperse;—Or, worse still—you will say—getting actually into the House, but in a situation too distant to allow a view of the stage, where you now faint with intolerable heat, are now chilled to death by blasts cold as if they bore on their wings all the ices of the frozen Ocean, have your ears rent with ignorant bursts of applause *loud as the wolves on Orca's stormy shore,* are now terrified as if by the

hisses of myriads of angry cats reinforced with legions of rattle snakes, now shrink from an insurrection to violence terrible as when the earth-born giants heaped mountain upon mountain, and planted their batteries against the Deities of Heaven?

*Sen.* Horrible! Horrible! I once experienced all this! When, even now, I think of it,—my very flesh creeps at the remembrance. I can hardly believe myself safe at this moment. It is astonishing to me to think, that I could survive it!

*Merry.* Survive it! How came you to be so eager to run yourself into it? How came such crowds of old and young, rich and poor, stout and sickly, males and females, to press themselves into the same situation? With a knowledge, that the house would be almost empty,—would any one of all those be so anxious to get, for that night, a seat in it? Is it not the fame of the crowd that contributes the most to augment it? Tell the same multitude separately, that, performers even greater than those I named, are to grace the scene, but that little or no company is

to be attracted to see them;—not Garrick, nor Roscius himself from the dead shall have power to draw them together! It is, then, the very crowd, the very difficulty, the very squeezing, the very noise of applauses, the very discord of hisses and disapprobation, that constitutes the grand charm of public entertainments like these. It is a charm adapted to the feelings and the temper of every age. What though death, the fracture of limbs, or disease never afterwards to be subdued, may be the frequent consequence? All joy hovers over the verge of misfortune. Man delights to pursue his pleasures to those extreme limits at which they border on suffering. The misfortune is accident;—the joy, the comfort, is of the essential nature of the thing!—Men have died of laughing; some, amidst the joys of a wedding night; others, of the ecstacy of recovered liberty; others, of the satisfaction which has been shed over their minds upon learning, that a wife, a husband, or a child supposed to have been lost, still lived in health and to their wishes. But,

the joys which thus ended in misfortune, were not, for that, the less sincerely joys! Nor are any other accidents attending a crowd at the theatres, more capable to alter the true nature of those joys to which they prove, at times, the natural catastrophe!

*Sen.* If I had not felt so much bruised, and hyp'd, and frightened upon the occasion I mentioned to you; I might have been convinced by the truths you state, that it was an occasion of joy. But, I find it difficult to reconcile my recollections with your reasonings. And yet, I will freely own, that you have awakened in me, a strong curiosity to make a new experiment of this comfort of yours. And, if Cooke, or Kemble, or Betty shall ever again be able to assemble such a multitude at either of our Winter-theatres; I shall not willingly fail to be in the midst of it.

(C. 5.)

*Tes.* Among the out-of-doors Comforts of London and its environs—what think you of finding your favourite field, in the

most pleasing month of the year, manured with soil from the Nightmen's carts, that infects the air to a distance, with an insufferable stench, even for six or seven weeks together?

*Merry.* Ah! Mr. Testy! Mr. Testy! Sure! You cannot but have read BURKE on "the Sublime and the Beautiful." Does not he inform you, that noisome stench is one grand source of the Sublime? What though the Sublime do not communicate exactly that sort of Delight which is derived from the perception of the Beautiful? You know that the sentiments of the Sublime, however they may differ from those of the Beautiful, are the most elevating, the most expanding, the most adapted to please the mind with a consciousness of the force and grandeur of its own energies, of any that can possibly touch the heart or the imagination of man. Your field was before but beautiful! The care of the farmer has suddenly transformed it, for your pleasure, into a scene of sublimity—sublime even as the *fauces* of the lake

Avernus itself! How convenient, how interesting the change!

Besides, while you pass through such a scene,—how pleasing to reflect, that the vilest things on earth are capable of being rendered the most admirably conducive to its fertility and beauty! When the filth of our streets and houses is thus made to become the parent of rich, abundant verdure, freshness, and fragrance to our fields and pastures—what is it that we may not presume to hope from the bounty of Nature, and the Art of Man? How pleasing to reflect on the metamorphosis which you are, here, in a few months, to expect, of this filth to fragrance!

*Tes.* Ha! ha! ha!—Very well, indeed! There is nothing, I find, out of which, a resolutely sanguine and contented mind may not extract matter of happiness. I hope Mr. Merryfellow is able to bring his nose to sympathize with his imagination, when the stench of such a manured field swells his soul with emotions of Sublimity, or leads out his intellect into a train of agreeable meditation on the bounties of

Nature, and the beneficent utilities of human Art? Eh?

*Chear.* Oh! He takes care to *look forward, farther than his Nose!*—But let us change the topic. What should you think, Gentlemen, of the Comfort of—stopping with eager curiosity—to discover what it was so very extraordinary, that arrested the attention of a whole multitude of passengers in the street,—and finding, after many inquiries, to many of which you had insolent *quizzing*, to all unsatisfactory, answers,—that it was only an old apple-woman who had dropped half-a-dozen golden rennets from her baskets,—or two drunken wenches of the town, that had loudly accosted one another by the appellative name that belonged the most properly to them both—or a seemingly lame and a seemingly blind beggar whose association had been suddenly broken, so that each betrayed the other's secret,—and the lame was made to run, and the blind recovered his sight?

*Sen.* Provoking enough!

*Chear.* But, the provocation may well

be suppressed for the sake of the amusement.

A remarkable contrast of puny causes with operose and magnificent effects, or of slight effects with a mighty preparation of causes, is ever among those sources of Humour and Ridicule which prove the most diverting to the mind of man. To see a crowd at gaze over an incident or appearance, that, truly known, is not of a nature to rouse wonder or to interest curiosity—cannot but dispose the person to laugh, who feels himself, in regard to such objects, quite secure in the *Nil admirari*. He views the whole crowd, as fools in comparison with himself.

It is pleasing to find, where you were, at first, led to dread some melancholy accident, that nothing such has taken place. You fancied, that, perhaps, a child had been killed, or some portly alderman had dropped down dead in a fit of apoplexy: you find, that it is only something too trivial to move either joy or sorrow:—To a good heart what an agreeable disappointment!

The sympathy of gaping wonder, which you, in such an instance, witness among the crowd, affords a pleasing comic proof of the community of the nature of men—of the manner in which the chords, whether of mirth or of melancholy, vibrate, in almost all hearts, in unison.

There are always a multitude of other circumstances, of attitudes, of imagery, of looks, of exclamations, the most ludicrously humorous, among a mob stopping one after another in the streets, upon such an occasion. Comedy, farce, satire, the comic pencil of the Dutch Artist, have borrowed from occasions like this, many of their most irresistibly diverting materials.

Such an assemblage proves, too, one of the most convincing evidences, that the streets are filled with an immense concourse of passengers. For it is soon perceived, that, not simpleton ignorance and wonder in those passengers in general, but their numbers, are the true causes, why so many of them suffer their attention to be so arrested by the veriest trifles.

*Tes.* I give you joy of such comforts! I'll none of them.

*Merry.* You, Mr. Testy, would prefer, no doubt, the Comforts of a London fog, such as at noon-day, often invests the streets in darkness palpable?

*Sen.* Pray, what may these be?—

(C. 6.)

*Merry.* What! does it not hide from the eyes, every object of terrour and distress? Don't it clothe you in Jack the Giant-killer's Coat of Invisibility? Does it not give the advantage, denied but to the favourites of the Gods of Antiquity, to walk under the protection of a cloud, which neither enemies nor over-officious would-be friends can penetrate? Would Horace not have been glad of such a fog, to hide him from that teizing hero of one of his satires, who seized him, and stuck so fast to him in the *Via Sacra*? Was it not of the singular favour of Venus, that Æneas was concealed under such a fog, at his first entrance into Carthage? Nay, was it not under the protection of such a fog,

that the Israelites, in their flight out of Egypt, eluded the pursuit of Pharaoh's host?

And then, consider the charming variety of burning candles by day, in your apartments—and walking abroad, at noon, with a dark lanthorn!

*Sen.* But, the ludicrous, unfortunate ascidents that are apt, in such darkness, to befal one in the streets?

*Merry.* Why, what though you should run your nose against a post, at a time when your neighbour cannot see your misadventure, to laugh at it? And, if accidents of more serious misfortune happen to others; your feelings are not distressed by the sympathy which, in light, they might excite—for, you cannot see them!

(C. 7.)

*Tes.* Well, then! what think you of the annoyances of Coffee-house conversation in London? Does not every foolish and stupid fellow infest the Coffee-houses to which he may have heard, that men of genius and intelligence occasionally resort?

Do not such persons the most eagerly and pertinaciously obtrude their conversation, in the hope to be distinguished as having talked well in such a Coffee-house? Does not a certain degree of intoxication often animate the conversation to boisterousness? Is it not common to meet, in such places—perhaps *one old fool* that, without sense to distinguish a pear from a potatoe, shall boast to have been against the Government ever since the American war,—and who knows no rule for his opinion, but to be ever against—against?—perhaps *another*, who affects on every subject peculiar refinement of taste, and a fiery rectitude of opinion, neither the one nor the other of which he can evince but by bursts of maniac passion, by incessant puffings of morbid irritability, by the most absurd paradoxes ever expressed in articulate speech? Does there not reign in such Coffee-house-conversation,—a familiarity as free as that of intimate, friendly, domestic converse,—and a rudeness and a pertinacious disobligingness, as if all were the fierce railings of inveterate enemies?—And yet, is not such amuse-

ment as Coffee-houses afford, a resource of indispensible necessity to relieve one from so many other evils of London?—What comfort is there to be discovered in all this?

*Chear.* A great deal of comfort.—The Ups and Downs, the Roughs and Smooths, the Bitters and Sweets, form the grand charm of life and of conversation. There is said to be a pleasure in madness, that none but madmen know. And there is a pleasure in, now and then, meeting testy contradiction, which the mind, while it enjoys it, will scarce own to be a pleasure. The affectations of the stupid, silly and vain; the curmudgeon selfishness of the miserly; the croaks and groans of the unreasonably discontented; the coxcomb-briskness of the unconsciously superficial; the mischievous sneers of those who express contempt of that which they cannot understand; the surly self conceit of persons who are proud only of prejudices and of an emptiness of mind which renders them ridiculous to others; the affectation and the morbid irritability of those who

come abroad only to make a parade of cankered criticism of every word that is uttered and every incident which passes before them:—ALL THESE are, by the order of nature, destined for the comic amusement of the men whose talents, whose feelings, whose taste, whose habitual dispositions qualify them for the enjoyment of every moral and physical appearance, out of which the springs of joy and comfort may be educed.

The *Boisterous* at a Coffee-house gives the bluster of rude Boreas in a storm at sea, without his shipwrecks. It affords a mirth-moving illustration of the inanity of noise and of the powers of wine. It is Bacchus and Æolus combining their forces to raise a tempest—and most impotently failing!

When the IGNORAMUS obtrudes himself into Society which he supposes enlightened; and strives, by talking away, to make a figure in it;—there is that inconsistency which AKENSIDE marks for one of the grand sources of the *ridiculous*,—between the confidence of the pretension and the extreme insufficiency of the

means to support it. The coxcomb relieves us from any painful feelings of compassion, by the presumption of his claims. The ridicule of the contrast between his demands and his abilities, is, of course, enjoyed in all its purity. The incongruity excites the liveliest merriment. The poor creature is perhaps heard with a patience which deludes him continually, into new follies. Or, if, on the other hand, he is, at last, driven from the scene, by general and unequivocal symptoms of merry contempt; the correction which his manners and his self-conceit receive, compensates to our benevolence for the pain he is made to undergo. The absurdity of his reasonings, the falsehood of his facts, the awkward uneasinesses into which he betrays himself, are those which Comedy and Farce find their very triumph in mimicking!

The Testy Old Fool, who claims the praise of discernment,—and a right to affect consequence,—because he has studied for half a century, to profess an opinion against the interests and wishes of his

country,—and has, constantly, made answer with a shrug of the shoulders and a hard, dry, unintelligent laugh, to every impressive argument that could be urged for his conviction,—is not less, a fair object of that ridicule which is ever amusing. —To be old without the benefits of experience—can never fail to move merry contempt, where that contempt is not prevented by compassion. To have continued in the wrong, for a series of years, with obstinacy, which neither reason nor conspicuous, impressive events could soften—can, in such light matters as the topics and the strain of Coffee-house chat,—expose a man to no sentiments in others to them more unpleasant than gay contempt.—To have continued so long, in sentiments maliciously hostile to the welfare of his country—and with reasons for such hostility, the most sillily absurd—must operate, as a cause still more powerful, to rouse that merry delight which it is in the elementary nature of the Ridiculous to yield. But, to rejoice in this error of reason, and in this malignant pravity of sentiment, as the

pride of wit and wisdom—is—wherever compassion and indignation can be suppressed—the very consummation of the ridicule, and the last heightening of its power to divert!

For the CRABBED IRRITABILITY *of the* CRITIC who pretends to hold forth the morbid impatience of his feelings, as a proof of superior discernment; this, also, is one of the amusements, the comforts of Coffee-house intercourse,—not at all one of its chagrins. You mark his irritability, and the absurdity of reasonings and of judgment into which it betrays him. The absurdity is too glaring to leave it possible for you to do aught but smile or laugh. The absurdity which suppresses serious opposition, equally extinguishes serious compassion. These sentiments withdrawn; nothing but the pure gaiety, the necessary result from the excited sense of wit and ridicule, remains.—No sweet is to him, sweet enough; no sour, duly sour; light is to him not sufficiently lucid; nor air sufficiently colourless and impalpable.—On whatever subjects, the exercise of

this humour may turn, it is still entertaining.—Even where *to laugh*—may imply some *want of goodness or of grace*—yet to *be grave—must exceed all power of face.*

Ridicule, then, and gaiety—are the principal sentiments excited by those which you account the conspicuous nuisances of Coffee-house conversation. These emotions, as springing, naturally, from the modes of reflexion to which our minds have been moulded,—and as being without premeditated malice or evil intrigue,—are fair, ingenuous ingredients, in the general mixture, in the PUNCH, of the Comforts of Life. We may be allowed to take them then, to give a poignancy to the flavour of our Coffee, to serve as salt and water-cresses to our bread and butter, to improve the relish and the fragrance of a pot of green or black tea!—They have the effect of shadings to that conversation, modest, lively, natural, and in its information and distinctions correct, which constitutes the better part of Coffee-house Dialogue. Their intermixture in it, produces *an*

*effect* the most strikingly dramatic.—It diverts and enlivens us by the contrast between its turbulent variety, and the softened propriety which ought to prevail in our private and domestic associations.—It rouses one from drowsiness over the insipidity of the Newspapers. And, it presents us with pointless jokes, bulls, puns, solecisms, cockneyisms, which form a diverting supplement to those things which are the flowers of Newspaper wit and eloquence!

*Sen.* It may be, as you affirm. But, you seem to labour a great deal, in the attempt to make it out.

*Tes.* Nay; the enjoyments you speak of, are sufficiently to my taste. I have relished them. And I should be sorry to lose the hope of participating in them yet again and again.

*Merry.* Fairly avowed, Mr. TESTY! —You, I think, are qualified either to enjoy these Coffee-house comforts yourself, or to become an exciting cause of them to others. Ha! ha! ha!

(C. 8.)

*Chear.* But, to a mind of a chearful sanguine temperament, London affords innumerable other Comforts, even among those things which to the Over-Testy and the Over-Sensitive might appear to be only causes of misery.

*Tes.* "Well! what think you of the
" comfort of having your new hat ex-
" changed for an old one, in the breaking
" up of the company from some public
" dinner?"

*Chear.* The accident can give no uneasiness to the mind of a person retiring gay and elevated, from good company, a good dinner, and generous wines. He soars, for the moment, above such petty cares.

Perhaps the exchange is the mistake of intoxicated good fellowship. In this supposition, it excites no sentiment but of gaiety and good fellowship in the mind of the loser.

It was, perhaps, the trick of one of those merry fellows who delight in manual jokes. In this case, it is impossible for a

very good-natured man, not to smile over the petty joke,—or even for a testy one, not to think himself over-paid for the loss he sustains, by the contemptuous self-pleasing pride of superiority which it gives him occasion to cherish.

Has it been stolen by a person that actually wanted a better hat than his own, but could not afford to purchase such an one? "Why, then," will the exhilarated loser naturally say,—"fair befal the "thief!"

But, whatever may have been the motive or mistake of the man that went off with the fine new hat; the old one remains with him it has been left with, as a trophy of the convivial joy in consequence of which he acquired it. He may hang it up in his hall,—as the standard of the French *soi-disant* Invincibles is suspended in honor of their Conquerors. He may display it with the pride with which our tars lately displayed the Spanish flags over their treasures. He can preserve it; as the shells of Ossian's heroes were preserved in their halls of hospitality. Or he may put it

aside to be used with merry recollection whenever he goes to another public dinner. And as long as he retains it—he may boast, in his merry moments—what a *nice* bit of *old hat* he has got!

Are not these Comforts?

*Merry.* Aye; Comforts for which any choice spirit would gladly risk the loss of twenty new hats!

(C. 9.)

*Sen.* But, what "cure have you, Mr. "Merryfellow, for the fever of several "hours attendance in the outer room of a "public office?"

*Merry.* Oh! Abundance of preventives! and, even though these should be neglected, enough of specific cures!

The principal perhaps has no wish to see you: he is too busy to order your admission to his presence till you have wearied him out both of his rudeness and of his artifices: his attendant messengers carry in your card, with scornful indifference: and announce, with a proud satisfaction, that their patron cannot see you. You wait,

minute after minute, and half-hour after half-hour, in all the impatience of suspense: others, who came after you, are admitted before you: You get dissatisfied with being exposed to the gaze of so many persons,—messengers, clerks, and solicitors like yourself,—as come and go, from time to time, about you: At last you are informed, that the great man has gone out at another door, ten minutes since; and are left to walk away with your finger in your mouth, in the same suspense of doubt and expectation in which you came!

*Tes.* Very fairly put! Now, what Comfort do you know to derive from circumstances like these?

*Merry.* Oh! A great deal!

There is a pride in being a solicitor or remonstrant at the Offices of the Government of the Country.

The outer rooms at any of those Offices, are a scene in which to study several peculiar and interesting modifications of human business and character not to be viewed elsewhere. You have there, for nothing, sights as interesting as the wild beasts at

Pidcock's, the Taylor of Brentford's *superfine* horse at Astley's, the dancing dogs at Bartholomew's fair,—and, in the Chief of the Office, the personal consequence of the bulky Mr. Lambert, of the Irish Giant, or rather of the Invisible Girl herself!

You have opportunity to qualify yourself for an enlightened commentator on one of the most interesting passages in the works of Shakespeare, by contemplating and enduring, in real life,—

> " The insolence of office, and the spurns
> " Which patient merit of the unworthy takes."

You learn what an admirable resemblance there is between the exterior apparatus and effective management of public business, and those beauties of Gothic architecture, so well marked by the Poet Gray,—

> " Huge windows which shut out the light,—
> " Long passages that lead to nothing."

You get into the happiest mood imaginable for improvement in the fire of anti-

ministerial eloquence. Love is said, to make the dullest of men a Poet:—And, in a similar manner, a due length of attendance in the Outer-Rooms at a Public-Office, will kindle in almost any mind, that inspiration which launched the thunders of a CHATHAM, and which aimed the mortal, unerring, resistless shafts of a JUNIUS!

You have the happiness to serve an apprenticeship in the school of patience, that may serve perhaps to raise you to an equality of fame with patient Grizzel herself!

During your delay, you have the happiest leisure to cultivate that sainted perfection of the Indian *Fakirs*,—" *to fix the* " *eyes with a direction as steady and un-* " *changing as possible, on the point of the* " *nose!*"

The late Mr. Harris of Salisbury taught, that the end of tragic representations in the Drama, was, to harden the heart gradually against all the emotions of terror and of pity. And similar is the use of a due attendance as a Solicitor, in the outer-

rooms at a Public Office. It purifies the breast from the weakness of loyalty, from the esteem of ministerial talents, from the ambition of intercourse with men of political consequence, from foolish attachment to any one form of Government preferably to another, from the sneaking spirit of Dependence, from all those sentiments of political idol worship, which unman and debase the heart that holds them.

You learn the true value of POPE's supplement to the Beatitudes—"*Blessed is he*
"*who hath no expectations—for he shall not*
"*be disappointed!*"

If withheld from penetrating to the presence of the OURANG-OUTANG that sits enthroned WITHIN,—you find, at least, the fulfilment of those words in the book of the Revelations—"WITHOUT are dogs,
"and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and
"murderers, and idolaters, and whoso-
"ever loveth and maketh a lie!"

*Tes.* Preventives and Cures, these, which I would—much rather administer, than take for myself—much rather empty over the window than into my own sto-

mach. And yet, I doubt not but if enticed into the fever-giving crisis, I should be glad to have recourse to them.

(C. 10.)

*Sen.* Well! what should either of you think of "a *dance* along the streets, with "a *mad bull* in full pursuit?"

*Merry.* Charming opportunity for the display of agility, courage, dexterity at escape, and a religious antipathy to madness! Charming occasion to join the address of a *picaroon* in a Spanish bull-fight with the lightness and the convulsive movements of the dancer of the fandango!

(C. 11.)

*Tes.* But what comfort is there in the smell of the meat which salutes your nostrils as you pass through one of the London markets in the dog-days?

*Chear.* Oh! don't you recollect that Vitellius, the greatest Epicure of the Emperors of Rome, declared, that no smell was so savoury, as that of the putrid carcase of a fallen enemy?—And, if so great

a connoisseur in matters of this nature, was not wrong in his taste; much more savoury, sure must be the smell of carcases which are quite in a condition to make the best dishes.—Animal food is not in its true perfection till after it has been reduced by keeping, the nearest possible to putrescence, without being absolutely putrid.—And, what connoisseur in good eating, is there, who does not delight to receive the information of his nostrils, that any eatables of animal flesh which he finds are quite in a way to have the very *fumét* he admires, when they shall be put upon the table.

Besides, the market of Covent Garden itself does not present in greater variety, the stimuli to the sense of Smell, than does that of Leadenhall, of Newgate, or of St. James's.—These are the true scenes in which to enjoy that *omnis copia narium* which Horace so elegantly mentions among the highest pleasures of which the human senses are susceptible.

Again the "*acutis naribus*," the "*naso adunco*," the "*suspensum nasum*"—are

phrases used by the Roman writers, to indicate a carriage of the nose, that was ever regarded, as a sure indication of Wit in him who wore his nose in that fashion. Now, the fragrance which salutes the nostrils in passing through any one of our meat-markets in the dog-days, is apt to produce that very arrection and that very suspension of the nostrils which those noted phrases describe. And who would not rejoice to acquire the aspect and the feelings of a Wit, at so cheap a rate as that of a summer's forenoon's walk among the shambles?

Ah! what a comfort, what a pride it is, to meet the smell of tripe, and cow-heel, in a sunny day in July, when the thermometer indicates eighty degrees of heat in the shade!

You may recollect, likewise, that Dr. Samuel Johnson, in conversation with Mrs. Piozzi, was wont to describe Porridge-Island, as a scene, the fumes from which were avoided by many, as a luxury too rich, too inviting, too grateful to the sense. But if the steams from Porridge-

Island be so grateful—what is there not to be said and felt in favour of those which issue in the heats of July and August from the sheds and stalls in Clare-market?

*Sens.* Very well! very well! In future, I shall always, except when I am actually passing through our flesh markets, persuade myself, upon your authority, that the odours which they diffuse are inexpressibly grateful to the imagination and to the sense!

(C. 12.)

*Merry.* But let me particularly recommend to you, the *comfortable dry dust* blown in one's face, in the streets of London in any windy and sultry day in Summer!

*Tes.* Yes; that is, beyond all contradiction, most comfortable. It is the work of the Zephyrs condescending to sweep the streets. It was a comfort much valued by the men of pleasure who rode their curricles in the streets of Ancient Rome—as Horace bears witness—

"Sunt quos *curriculo pulverem*—collegisse juvat."

(C. 13.)

*Sen.* But pray tell me, how shall I derive comfort from the annoyances of an Organ-grinder or a Ballad-singer, when they strike up their Notes before my windows; and are so far from being reduced to silence by the halfpence I throw out to them, that the more I give, so much the more loudly and pertinaciously they prolong their discords?

*Chear.* Discords! Oh fie! How can you speak so?

Are not our Organ-grinders and Ballad-singers, the genuine representatives of the ancient harpers and minstrels, the admired authors of all that is peculiarly delightful in our national music? Who that reverences the memory of the harper and the minstrel, can refuse to lend a delighted ear to the Organ-grinder and the Ballad-singer?

Does not the true musical enthusiast take a pleasure in every species of music however simple and rude? And is not the man that has not music in him, fit for treasons,

plots, and every other deed or design that is foul and murtherous?

Is not the comic of these itinerant musicians and the mob around them that listens with ravished ears, ever irresistibly diverting?

Shall the Scotsman delight in his bagpipe? Shall the Irishman join ever with rapture in his national *Coronach?* And shall any Englishman confess himself to be without a taste for those musical charms of London, the Ballad and the Barrel-organ? Why, my friends, he is no true Englishman who can listen without rapture to the Butcher's Concert of Marrow-bones and Cleavers!

Besides, it is not by the natural independent power of the sounds,—so much as by the power they derive from association in our minds with the interesting imagery, the sentiments tender, sublime, or even ludicrous, which originally presented themselves in connection with them,—that music pleases. Now, the associations with the Organ-grinder's Notes and the Ballad-singer's Strain, are such, that I should think it

utterly impossible for either Mr. Testy or Mr. Sensitive to hear them without pleasure either serious or gay.

(C. 14.)

*Tes.* But, how should you like the sounds of horns, drums, jews' harps, and all the etcætera of mob music, by which I was roused from sleep at four o'clock, the first morning after I had taken a wedded female companion to my bed?

*Merry.* Ha! ha! ha! Oh, Mr. Testy! Mr. Testy! Sure, you were too happy to be awakened to a consciousness that you were in the arms of love and beauty—too happy—to dislike the sounds that awoke you—had they proceeded even from a concert of cats,—or from the rumbling of ten thousand milstones!

*Chear. Sen.*—Nay! Merryfellow has, decisively, the advantage here. Had the same concert disturbed Mr. Testy's morning slumbers, the fiftieth night after his wedding, perhaps he might have had better reason to dislike it. But, when music only wakes to joy,—who shall profess, that he is

not charmed even by its least skilful sounds?

(C. 15.)

*Tes.* "Well, then! what think you of "the comfort of lying, awake and unwell, "in bed, at night,—wishing anxiously to "know the hour,—and hour after hour, "for half the night, being by one little "incident or another, hindered from it, "by counting the sounds of the clock, or "distinguishing the imperfect articulation "of the watchman?"

*Chear.* Even this is, in truth, a comfort.—Awake and unwell in bed, one particularly wants something that may fix attention, and so amuse the mind. The feverishness, the indisposition of the mind to levity, and its temporary incapacity of serious meditation, with the absence of all the ordinary means of amusement in the light, leave it in a destitution of resources to divert *ennui*, by which the fever is continually augmented. But as soon as it gets an exterior object of attention, the fever is relieved. Watching to count the

hours,—it is diverted from preying upon itself: it settles into a state of comparative composure; and by the effect of this, it subsides, at last, into sleep. Does the striking of the hour elude one's vigilance a first time? Attention is renewed till, either the hour is satisfactorily counted, or sleep ensues. In either case, there is a gain of ease, of comfort, to him whose sleeplessness put him upon such an expedient.—Every one, who has ever been in the situation, knows the truth of this.—You yourself, Mr. Testy, must, assuredly have felt it. Your physician, if you chuse to consult him, will tell you the same thing as I.

*Sen.* On my life, I believe, you are in the right.—How I envy you, this art of yours, by which you so constantly convert the driest bones into rich portable soup; extract a precious spirit out of tinder and old rags; change verjuice into *capillaire;* and deprive the nauseous, the noisome, the rough, the discordant, of all their native power to annoy the senses!

*Tes.* But, it is now late in the morning:

and an engagement calls me away. Shall we meet and renew the conversation to-morrow?---

*Sen.* Most gladly! I am desirous to have the opinion of our friends in regard to the comforts of every department of human life and affairs!---

*Chear. Merry.* We will chearfully meet you. We shall esteem it the greatest happiness of life, if we can only restore to our old friends, that which appears to us to be the native tone of the feelings, fancy, and senses of man.

*Tes.* To-morrow, then, you shall take a family dinner with me at Highgate.

*Sen.* &c.---Agreed!---

# DIALOGUE THE FOURTH.

## COMFORTS OF SPORTS AND GAMES.

*Sensitive, Testy, Chearful, and Merryfellow.*

*Scene*---TESTY'S HOUSE AT HIGHGATE.

*Testy.*

WELCOME! Welcome to Highgate, my friends!---you are late.---I have been in eager expectation of you, these two hours. I almost imagined, that my old cook-maid was to have toiled and broiled herself in vain, in getting ready a dinner for you.---I began to fear, that you were going to enable me to add to the other Miseries of Life, that of being disappointed of an expected Dialogue about its Comforts.

*Merry.* Oh! Sir! I must intreat your pardon. I am solely to blame. I had been reading, before breakfast, the printed Dialogue between you and Mr. Sensitive, on the Miseries of Sports and Games.----I was willing to convince Sensitive, that he had mistaken in suffering himself to be persuaded, that Misery could so poison the best cates of felicity which ingenuity can provide for remedies against sorrow and care.---An Advertisement in the Morning Newspapers told us, that a grand cricket match was, this forenoon, to be played in *Lord's* grounds. I asked him and Chearful to pass that way,---that they might witness the gay excitement of spirits, the brisk, light exertion, and the play of lively, vigorous health, with which the contest of the game was pursued. They have beheld it.

*Sen.* Would, that I had been one among the Cricketers!

*Chear.* It is a game I have often played---Even now, I retain strength, activity, and spirits not unequal to it.

*Tes.* The time has been when I could

enjoy it. But, since I left off playing it, I have seen clearly---what a number of Miseries are unavoidably connected with it.

(C. 1.)

*Merry.* Aye, ay! You have made the discovery, only since you allowed yourself to become too restive and testy to use the game.

I, for my part, enjoy still with ardour, every GAME and SPORT, active or sedentary, of which I have any knowledge. I need not the excitement of betting, to rouse my spirits, and interest my heart in any of them. I can, still, join the children, in building houses of cards, in playing marbles and chuck-farthing, in pitching and tossing half-pence. I delight in Fives and Trap-ball. I can drive a hoop or wind a top with any boy at St Paul's School. I can fly my kite in the windy weather of Harvest, and follow it from field to field, over hedges and ditches, or through marshes, with as much eagerness as ever Naturalist displayed in the pursuit of a butterfly.

In Winter, I am charmed with the diversion of curling. I went to Holland, to enjoy skaiting in its true perfection. And when I was in Russia, I took the greatest pleasure in travelling on a sledge over the snow---and not less in sailing on the ice in a sledge boat.---I can scarce help joining in the contest---of Frenchmen and Englishmen, whenever I see the boys or peasantry engaged in it, any where in the immediate environs of London. I should like to join the journeymen tradesmen in playing at skittles, were it not for the coarse abuse and the sottish drinking with which they debase and spoil their game. At Edinburgh I took the greatest pleasure in joining the *Golfers* on the favourite scenes for their diversion, called *Leith Links* and *Bruntsfield Links*. And I was charmed when they went on the *Meadow*, there to join the Company of Archers, and to contend for the *Silver Arrow*---which I had, once, the honour to win. Many a time have I had my *shins* broken in playing at foot-ball. Indeed, I know not of any one out-of-door diversion, easy or athletic, that has

not a charm for me. There is a charm in these amusements, that fires every heart, and puts every one's spirits in brisk action. They give the glow of health. They brace every nerve, and corroborate every muscle. There are no miseries necessarily inherent in these games and sports. Those evils which have been ascribed to them, are introduced into them, by the humours, the extravagant eagerness, and the folly, or the imbecility in health or temper, of the persons who join in them. Gaining the game---what a triumph! --Not that of a conqueror---not that of a merchant counting his Cent. per Cent. profits from Buenos Ayres,---more gratifying to the heart! Unsuccessful,----you have, however, enjoyed the contest of emulation, the play of spirits, the exercise of agility and stratagem, the invigoration of the limbs, which it is natural for the active and athletic sports to bestow! Betts and pecuniary stakes do not belong unavoidably to our games and sports. You never yet saw a man who delights much in out-of-doors sports, without pushing them

to that which is denominated Gambling,--- but enjoyed a constitutional chearfulness, gaiety, and vigorous yet light and springy activity. He who has these advantages--- is to the man who loiters and languishes, and turns himself from side to side, on his bed or sofa, and slumbers till he becomes incapable of sound refreshing sleep, ---is to such a person,---as the eagle to the ostrich,---as the leveret to the pig,---as the bounding squirrel to the torpid sloth. No exercise of serious labour ever equals the spirit-stirring, joy-creating, health-giving, effects of the games of sport. Care counteracts the invigorating influence of the exercise, in every case of serious business-application. It counteracts that influence equally, in every case, in which, by putting much money to hazard on the game, you reduce it from its genuine nature, into matter of serious business. It is the lively emulation free from anxious care---it is the airy activity---it is the unconstrained, unforced exercise of all our powers of mind and body in Games of Sport,---that renders them, so eminently, bark and steel to the

mind,---and that gives, by them, so much of springy lightness and vigour to every limb, joint, bone, sinew, and muscle of the whole corporeal frame!

*Tes.* A truce with your dissertation---- Within a few minutes, we shall be called to dinner.

(C. 2.)

*Sen.* What Merryfellow says of out-of-doors Sports, is, to my mind, highly satisfactory.---But I have always regarded the SEDENTARY GAMES within doors, or those which are little better than sedentary, as Games in which listlessness, peevishness, and torpor, the most remarkably usurped the false name of joy?---Is it not so?

*Chear.* No, indeed! CARDS! Use them in their genuine subserviency to amusement;---keeping at a distance, that spirit of gambling which converts the play with them into the dullest of plodding businesses:---they are one of the most pleasing of the artificial solaces of human care.

How innocent! how animatingly pleas-

ing to children! the Games of POPE JOAN and COMMERCE! how simple! how admirably adapted to compose little folks to satisfied amusement in that society with their parents and seniors in general, in which it is one great art and object of education, to win them to take delight! How their eyes glisten! What keen alacrity of attention! what genuine grace, vivacity, and pleasure in their smiles! how hearty, how sweet to the ear, their sudden shouts and laughter of surprize and exultation! What an accordant sympathy of gaiety and joy reigns throughout the little party! How the old grow young in heart and spirits, amidst the circle! But for the *Cards*,---these sparkling eyes would, at the hour of seven or eight in a winter's evening, have been sunk unseasonably in sleep or drowned in fretful tears. Little selfish contentions might have been preparing them for habits of mutual unkindness in future life. There might have been none of that association of amusement between them and their seniors in the family, which is ever necessary to make the old

and the young duly fond of each other's company! And then, are not all their faculties invigorated and enlivened by the exercise? Does it not contribute as much as Arithmetic, or the cranks and points of Logic, to sharpen and inspirit their reasoning powers?

CATCH HONOURS! At a rustic fireside -- in a winter's evening---when the wind blew loud, the snow fell thick and heavy, the frost congealed all to ice, without,---when the shepherd had returned from gathering in his sheep to some sheltered nook, ---when the maids had ended their work in the cow-house, at the barn, and almost in the kitchen,---when the thresher laid aside his flail,---when the plowman had ceased, for the night, from mending his horses' furniture,---when the smearer had inlaid with his mixture of butter and tar, that number of the fleeces of the living flock, which it was his daily task thus to cover from the cold,---when the children of the family were dismissed from their lessons in the school room,---when the old folks were induced to join in the general disposition

to shut out, by chearfulness, the chilness, and the horror of the storm,---while the turf and logs were piled high on the hearth, and the fire blazed genial, chearful, and bright,---Oh, then have I seen the game of CATCH HONOURS played with an eagerness of attention, with a frank and hearty merriment, with an archness of skill, and a drollery in blunders, with a wit and humour exciting power, with a joy-creating influence, and withal a simple ingenuous innocence and kindness,----which it does my heart good to remember, still! No peevishness, no undue idleness associated themselves with the Game. It was prolonged, with universal gaiety, till the arrival of the hour of supper and of prayer. It seemed, as it were, to hush the noise of the storm. And while it was prolonged, every heart nestled in some manner, closer to another. Ever since then has the Game of CATCH HONOURS been dear to me. Seldom have I seen any thing alike subservient to the excitement and maintenance of genuine domestic joy!

Every voice speaks the praises of WHIST,

---Millions of hearts are, every evening, beguiled, by it, from sorrow. It is one of the most successful of all care-killers. It is the happiest dispeller of *Ennui*. Matrons, widows, and grey-haired spinsters find it, even more than ratafia, or cherry-brandy, the consolation of their disappointments, petty emulations, and anxieties. Parsons, in town or country, invalid captains, shopkeepers retired to *otium cum dignitate*, could not live without it. It is the grand resource of the gouty and the bedrid. It cheers the prisoner: it smooths the pillow of sickness. It affords the most reasonable interruption of conversation breaking out into peevishness or sinking into langour. It unites old and young, male and female, rich and poor, the learned and the ignorant, the serious and the gay, round the same tables; and in amusement in which, as it is accommodated to all tempers and humours equally, they all participate alike. It accustoms the mind to habits of vivid, chearful attention. It exercises it, in foresight, in vigilance, in an emulation without envy, in that lively yet

easy play of the passions which is salutary to the mind, by agitating, and enlivening it, without tempesting it with such storms of emotion as might overset the balance of the soul, and make a wreck of its reason, steadiness, and peace.

It has, besides, other recommendations. In its abuse, it often excites admirable displays of female oratory. When made the subject of pecuniary hazards, it often raises to the dignity of gaining money, persons who could not have got a single farthing by their industry in any one of the useful employments of life. It absorbs and deadens love, ambition, and many of those other passions of which the turbulence is the cause of so many of the errors and affectations of men in society. It furnishes the means of that *Much-ado-about-nothing*, wanting which, half the world would be left without aught by which to please, or upon which to value themselves.

*Tes.* Enough of WHIST!---unless you mean to add, that it is the very Game which the placid Deities of Epicurus, in their retirement from all inspection of the

affairs of this world, play "from night to "morn, from morn to dewy eve."

(C. 4)

*Sen.* What have you, Mr. Merryfellow, to say of "Horse-racing" and the "CHACE?" You omitted the mention of them, in your enumeration of your favourite out-of-doors diversions.

*Merry.* I have not very often joined the jovial parties who pursue the fox and stag, and follow the hounds. But, their diversions are, of almost all, the most animated and pleasing. The cruelty of pursuing a brute animal to death, is lost sight of, while the attention is occupied with the society of exercise and amusement, with the qualities of the dogs and horses, with the difficulties and facilities of the ground, with the contest of activity and swiftness between the pursuers and the animal pursued. Amidst the animation of the pursuit, none thinks of those little incidents as *Miseries*, which an over-Testy or over-Sensitive spectator might number as such. Horses, hounds, hunters, are excited to the very height of joy and eagerness.

The capture or death of the hare, fox, or stag, exalts the amusement and the agreeable agitation of spirits to the utmost pitch. Does the animal pursued, elude, or baffle the pursuit? Admiration of his powers of escape, gives almost as much pleasure, as would have been derived from the triumph of the dogs.---The voices of the dogs resounding, in the woods and over the mountains, in the open air, have somewhat the effect of a bold and rich music to ears in any degree accustomed to them. New health, new vigour, new spirits are derived from the exercise, to all who take a part in it---derived, not for the present time only, but for subsequent life. The race, and the activity of the horses and dogs, are highly improved. Even the hazards are more than compensated by the boldness, skill and activity acquired amongst them.

HORSE RACING exhibits the noblest of our domesticated animals, in the exercise of their most generous and interesting qualities. It promotes their improvement in the qualities which render the race in general, the most profitable, as a subject of

commerce, the most useful as assistants to our labours and reliefs to our indolence. The emulation with which they run, the swiftness they display, the manner in which the triumph is held in suspense to the last moment of the race, are unavoidably interesting, in no ordinary degree, to the minds of the spectators. Horse-races acquire, likewise, a new interest, from their becoming, in some manner, calls for the assemblage of the healthy, the active, and the gay, to social and convivial amusements in which comedy and farce intermingle themselves with the Heroic of these Games. Trade and liberal Intelligence are, at the same time, promoted, improved, enlivened. Those trivial incidents of less pleasing effect which Mr. Testy might number among the Miseries of the Horse-race and of the Chace, are but the shades requisite to give due effect to the lights in a picture,---the passages between the grand apartments in a palace, ---the contrast and reliefs in an ornamented landscape,---that infusion of bitters without having tasted which, we should

never find the cup of unmixed sweetness, exquisitely delicious.

(C. 5.)

*Sen.* I was once, you may remember, fond of *Music* and DANCING. My taste for Music is, now, the torment of my life. I dance no more.

*Merry.* Dance no more! Dance no more! I dance still with as much agility and vivacity, as when we were together at the Dancing-school Balls, in the recreations allowed us from our early studies. I intend to continue to dance, till I shall be in the condition of the Frenchman mentioned by Goldsmith---

> "And the gay grandsire skilled in gestic lore,
> "Has frisked beneath the burthen of fourscore."

Dancing, not intemperately nor unseasonably pursued, is the most salutary of exercises. It puts every joint, limb, and sinew of the body in free and lively motion. It quickens the flow of the blood, the pulsations of the heart, the performance of all those functions within the frame by which life is sustained and exhilarated. It enlivens

the nicer sensations of the body, and with these, all the more delicate sensibilities of the soul. It attempers brisk motion to divine grace of attitude and gesture. It allies amusement to refined and elegant art. It assembles the young in parties of pleasure in which innocence, vivacity, and delicacy necessarily preside. It restores to those who are fast advancing in middle age, all the fresh vivacity and gaiety of their spring of life. It has often made the withered spinster forget her wrinkles; and has made the senior despise his gout and his corns. There is much of native chearfulness in the simple, natural exercise of dancing, by those who are in the prime of their health and their years. To those who fondly attempt to shine in it,---though nature and the waste of years have denied them the power,---it *must* have some secret charm by which it is bewitchingly pleasing to them. Their intermixture in the dance has, in the most admirable degree, the power to divert the spectators and the junior partners in the activity of the diversion, with all that is most ludicrous in Comedy and

Farce. Do the feet of the Dancers beat time to the Music? How charming this consent of the Music of sounds with that of Motion! Besides, how ingenious those imitations, partly natural, partly allegorical, of acts in real life, which the different species of Dances present! I love the Scottish Country-Dance and Reel, the English Hornpipe, the French Minuet and Cotillon, the German Walse, the Spanish Fandango, the Morrice-Dance of the Moors, the pretty wanton trippings of the Dancing-Girls in Egypt, and all the pantomime movements of the young companies of priestesses of pleasure attached to the temples of Bramah in the East. I am charmed no less with the sight of the dance than with actually taking a part in it. How I admire the light and varied steps of a Parisot and a Hilligsberg! Much more, however, am I pleased with those Dances, many-figured, and woven into a regular Drama; in the performance of which numbers of Sylph-like figures, male and female, move, with enchantingly airy activity, on our Opera theatre; and of

which the pantomimic power carries almost as much meaning to the mind through the eye only, as if the ear were addressed in the Dialogue of a legitimate Drama.

*Chear.* Enough of Dancing! The general principles which have been stated in respect to the Games and Sports we have enumerated may be applied to all the rest.

*Tes.* But your Joys of Games and Sports do not exclude our Miseries of them!

(C. 6.)

*Merry.* What! Call you it a misery "to slip and fall in a ludicrous posture "in skaiting?"----This is the best amusement of the sport. It excites more merriment than if one should run ten miles without a fall. It makes those around laugh so heartily, that the person who falls cannot but laugh himself full as merrily as any one among them. Look at boys amidst their diversions----the merriment comes chiefly from the tricks, ludicrous accidents, and surprises, such as your

fall on the ice, which happen as the game proceeds.

(C. 7.)

*Chear.* "Angle, without a bite for "hour after hour, or after a fine Jack is "on your hook, let him escape."---What is all this but---a perpetual renovation of attention and hope----an improvement of patience----bloodless amusement----the enjoyment of all the sport of fishing, without hardening one's heart, or making one's hands dirty with the slime and blood of the fish? And when the great jack once on your hook, slips so dexterously off again---is not this a most interesting representation of the fate by which, when good fortune in the affairs of the world seems caught,---it suddenly glides away again? Is it not a fine warning to the Angler to be himself on the watch,----even thus to make his escape whenever he shall find himself hooked almost to his ruin by any of the false arts of the world?---There are comforts in the fruitless angling, in the loss of the jack, much preferable, for

many minds, to whatever could have been derived from the fullest success.

(C. 8.)

*Tes.* "A covey in view---after a long "day's fruitless fag---then a flash in the "pan."

*Merry.* Oh! the disappointment in this case, is so truly ludicrous, that it is impossible for even him whom it befals, not to be infinitely diverted by it.

(C. 9.)

*Sen,* "Tearing your fair partner's dra-"pery, by the awkward movement of your "foot and leg in a dance."

*Merry.* Oh! the Lady can never be displeased with an accident which only evinces your activity to please her, to exceed your dexterity! She may attribute it to the agitation excited by the power of her charms. She may consider you, as amorously anxious to get as near to her as possible. And, it is an old observation, that, on all occasions the women like to be approached by men who are bold and

spirited, though a little awkward. Your partner is pleased: the rest of the party are diverted; and you go down the rest of the dance, only with so much the more vivacity. Besides, the accident, by the apologies it calls for, brings you into more familiar and intimate conversation with your fair partner. Many a lively fellow, just fallen over head and ears in love, has contrived by such a seeming awkwardness, to tear his partner's gown and petticoat, in hopes to make his way by the rent, into her good graces, so that he might afterwards acquire a right to take still greater liberties with her under garments.

(C. 10.)

*Tes.* "Dancing to the music of drunk-
" en, unskilful fidlers, who keep you inces-
" santly changing from jig to minuet---and
" from minuet to jig."

*Merry.* He who persists to dance to such music, must take a pleasure in the dance, or in his companions in it, which is not to be spoiled by the worst efforts of a drunken fidler.---Besides, the worse, the

more irregular, the music;---so much the greater is the merit of the dancer that can pursue it, and keep time with it:---while, on the other hand, he who is fond of dancing without being a proficient in it,---has in the badness of the music, a good excuse for not beating time to it, and for the awkward prancing, skipping, and hobbling of his steps.---The exquisite dancer may reflect, with pleasure, that between him and the musicians, is exactly reversed the fact of the famous epigram---

"How ill the motion with the music suits!
"So Orpheus fiddled, and so danced the brutes!"

The bad dancer may console himself with the reflexion, that the *motion* and the *music* suit each other *well*, since he cannot, for his life, dance worse than the musicians play.---Take it how you will; here is Comfort, and nothing but Comfort.—— *(A servant entering whispers Testy)*—— TESTY.---Gentlemen! I fear that you must add to your other Comforts, that of a spoiled dinner. In the first place,---every thing has been kept at the fire---till the

boiled is boiled to rags, and the roast is roasted to powder. In the next place,—all has been on the table, till it is quite cold.---This comes of Mr. SENSITIVE'S eagerness for Comforts, and Mr Merry-fellow's assiduity to obligehim.---But, come, let us try whether we may not have gained in keenness of appetite, what will enable us to relish even a spoiled dinner?

# DIALOGUE THE FIFTH.

## COMFORTS OF TRAVELLING.

*Testy, Sensitive, Chearful, and Merryfellow.*

*Scene*---THE DRAWING ROOM.

*Testy.*

YES! Chearful, I was abroad long enough to learn an impatient distaste of French and Italian Cookery. And, the whole time of my Travels, was so much a peregrination of Miseries, that it is, even now, Death to me, to think of it. The pilgrim who trudged from Alcala to Loretto, with unboiled peas in his shoes, had not more torture in his journey, than I in my Grand Tour. I was fleeced by inn-keepers; robbed by valets; whirled

with rapidity in post coaches where I should have wished to move on gently--- dragged on at a snail's pace when I desired promptitude and velocity. I went to see paintings, buildings, and statues, which have nothing to recommend them to notice, but that fool after fool has, for centuries, been accustomed to praise them against his conscience, each that he might not seem less a Connoisseur, than another who had done as much before him I was conducted, by my bear-leader, from capital to capital, with a promise to shew me striking diversities of modes and manners. But, I found Paris like London, Rome like Paris, Vienna like Rome, Petersburgh like Vienna, and even the Asiatic Moscow and Constantinople not so much distinguished from our European Capitals, as to compensate me for the trouble of having gone to see them. I went to visit mountains, lakes, rivers, vales, forests, ornamented grounds, celebrated in the *True Histories*, the *Munchausen Memoirs* of so many modern travellers. But, it was still only wood, water, and ground---a Dutch

man's dinner, three rounds of beef, three plates of salt-fish, three buttered apple-pies,---a sailor's best waistcoat, velvet before, and velvet behind,---a Citizen's prospect from his villa at Islington, the dusty road, the same succession of passengers which he views from his shop-door in Cheapside! Went I to visit the manufactures of Art? What did they exhibit---but the misery of toil and its vanity,---the affectation and the ridicule of human ingenuity,---the oppressions of authority and constraint? What so ridiculous, as to see two men gravely rubbing two slabs of marble one against another for a whole day?---What can be so much an exhibition of human misery and oppression, as to see hundreds of children, in very infancy, shut up together in one comparatively narrow work room,---pallid and sickly as so many sallad plants forced in the shade,---breathing nothing but phthisic and asthma, amidst flue and dust and a noxious almost mephitic air, continually inspired and respired by their own lungs,---watching with reluctant attention, the movement of cords

and spindles, and the extension of threads, ---and constantly shuddering under the eye and the rod of an unfeeling task-master?---And, then, to think, that all this is only to spoil the bounties of Nature---instead of adding to the accommodations and felicities of human life! The thought puts me distracted.---I ate at the *Tables d'Hote*---a medley of insufferably impertinent company!---a profusion of wretched dishes,---in which there was an admirable rivalry between the badness of the ingredients and the filth and nauseousness of the cookery employed to disguise them! What I was obliged to drink for wine, was a wretched rot-gut worse than the most villainous table-beer which could be served out from a London tap-room, or the weakest distiller's wash ever given to fatten oxen or pigs. The beds were hard as a Scotsman's lair of ferns or heath, and nasty as a hog-stye.---Within the British dominions, the Irish made me drink myself to the most feverish intoxication---then called me to make myself a mark for their pistol shots in con-

sequence of its effects---and after all, loudly boasted their hospitality to me! The Scots infected me with the itch---poisoned me with oaten cakes and whisky---harrassed me to death by dragging me here to admire the soft beauty of their craggy heath-covered mountains, and there to wonder at the sublime expanse of their peat-morasses and quagmires. But, they were above all, the most teazing and ridiculous, when they insisted upon their genius for improvements in husbandry; and quoted, as instances, their skill---to make horses starve on chopped furze, that might have lived and thrived on corn and hay---and to obtain scanty crops of grey oats on land where grew before, only the nettle, the duck-weed, and the *Carduus Benedictus!* I know not what I had to do to travel. I am sure that I have learned by it, nothing which it is a pleasure to remember.

*Chear.* Oh! Mr. Testy, you have had a thousand advantages from travelling, if you would only own them to us, or at least to your own heart!

(C. 1.)

The diversities of Nature and human character may be less numerous and less striking than the inexperienced imagination is willing to suppose them. But, such diversities there are. And it is the most pleasing office of the human intellect to trace them---as in travelling---

(C. 2.)

The mind has within itself more or fewer resources for enjoyment, in proportion as it possesses a larger or smaller store of knowledge upon which the fancy, the passions, the affections, and the reasoning faculty may be employed. But, the elements of that knowledge are only *sentiments* such as have been uttered from an impassionate heart, and *imagery* such as when presented actually pictures itself on the fancy, and excites new emotions in the breast. Now, where are we to gain an acquaintance with these sentiments and imagery? Not from books: These but revive them, by artificial and arbitrary signs,

in minds in which they were before pictured.---Not from the oral information of others: We can no more understand oral than written information, if we have not in our minds those primary sentiments and images to which it refers, and of which all its combinations are necessarily made up. The sight of the very features of Nature; converse with man in all the native and artificial varieties of the species; can, alone, impart that genuine knowledge which invigorates the understanding, enriches the fancy and gives it the true spring of genius, warms, elevates, and expands the heart. This is the grand acquisition to be gained by Travel. It compensates for every petty vexation. It is, in spite of every disagreeable incident, a perpetual spring of pleasure even to the most torpid and peevish minds.

(C. 3.)

Then, Mr. Testy, think of being able to tell among the untravelled, that one has been in France or Italy!---It is satisfactory to think that no man can stop me short in

a speech, or knock me down in my argument, by appealing to a practice abroad of which he has had opportunity to get a knowledge while I know nothing of it.—Is it not to some testy and patriot tempers, a pleasure worthy to be purchased by a thousand vexations and fatigues—only to curse the French, Spaniards, Italians, and Germans, and all that they have among them, in the plain God-damn-me English of honest John Bull? Is it not charming to acquire the privilege of smattering broken French or Italian, with the same authority as if it were the most correct and pure,—authority which you animate and maintain because you have smattered the gibberish in its native country? Abroad, a young man may sow his wild oats with less loss of character, than if he did the same among the neighbours of his family with whom he is to pass his subsequent life at home.—What a licence of story-telling, too, does not a traveller acquire? He may have feasted on lion's flesh, with good Dr. Shaw: With Mr. Bruce, he may have eaten part of a cow, and turned out the

rest to grass: he may have wandered in the fairy land of some Juan Fernandez, with Robinson Crusoe—or lived with Lemuel Gulliver among Houynhmns—traversed oceans in a canoe with Benjowski—or atchieved even all the mightiest adventures of Baron Munchausen!—This is a pride that may distinguish him through life. It will give, perpetually, new fire to his imagination: it will enable him often to rouse the wonder of his friends, and often to move their gaiety, if he fail of commanding their respect.—It is almost worth while for a Londoner to go to Edinburgh—that he may be enabled—to speak of its savory smells,—and to insist that all Scotland is scarce bigger than St. Paul's Church-Yard.—He should go to Ireland—if it were but to satisfy himself whether children there grow out of the ground with potatoes? and whether it be not as common in the Coffee-houses in Dublin, to call for powder and ball, as for coffee and muffins, for two? A travelled gentleman has, among the other privileges of the character, that of, with impunity,—finding nothing right

at home—affecting an admiration of foreign policy, morals, and manners—wearing his dress in what he may pretend to be a foreign fashion—and furnishing his house with articles of foreign furniture appropriated each to uses the most opposite to those for which it was really intended! Besides, his genius is, by his travel, qualified for whatever is great.—If, Thomson observed against the author of Leonidas—"He write an Epic Poem! he never saw "a mountain in his life!"—must not the youth that has traversed the Alps, and ascended to the very pinnacle of *Mont Blanc*, be qualified for all that is sublime?—And who knows but the travelled youth may bring home some new inventions to enrich the arts of his country—some improvement of a cork-screw or a shoe buckle—a new method of brushing the teeth or of cutting the hair?—Sir Henry Wotton wrote of an ambassador,—"That "he was a person sent to *lye* abroad for "the good of his country." But, in the present time, our young men of fortune and our commercial travellers seem to go

abroad precisely for some such purposes. Does not this give a consequence to their Travels, that should be a consolation and comfort to them amidst every petty inconvenience, to which their perigrinations may expose them? They are so many specimens of the native excellencies of our country, which we send out, to impress foreigners with opinions in its favour, that may be expected to command their curiosity and reverence.—They go abroad, too, as blocks, on which our broad-cloth and other manufactures, are hung for exhibition, to promote the extension of our trade.—They waste their money, with a profusion adapted to give foreigners an idea, that the streets of London must be paved with gold: And we know, that, to gain wealth to a man or a city, there is not, in the world, a better expedient, than to persuade people, that the man or the place has more than enough of it, already—How many delectable love-adventures has not a lively young traveller to expect!—Yorick's interview with a fair Flemish Dame in Dessein's coach-yard at Calais;—or his night-scene

with the fair Piedmontese,—in a double-bed room—and curtains fenced and fastened with great pins, in a rustic inn, on the borders of Savoy!

*Merry.* You say, that you caught the *itch* in Scotland. Be thankful, that it was not the leprosy,—the distemper which so afflicted the old age of Robert Bruce, the most heroic of the Scottish kings! James the First, you may recollect, pronounced the eulogy of that distemper in saying, that the enjoyment, which it afforded of scratching, was too delectable for a subject, or for any one under the rank of a crowned head, to enjoy! When the Scots spoke of the beauty of their crags and the sublime of their peat-bogs; if you could discover neither the beauty nor the sublimity; you would, at least, have very comfortable diversion in the contrast between the natural prepossession and the reality of the things. And when they talked, absurdly, of their improvements in Agriculture;—you could reflect with high self-gratification; how very much the old husbandry of England excelled in good

sense and in power to create fertility, all the most boasted improvements of the Scots!—Besides, you would have the pleasure of surprize in finding, that, however happy to Scotsmen the road that leads to London, there are other roads and other prospects which Scotsmen full as much admire.

*Tes.* They marched me, with unlucky officiousness, up among their Highland bogs, moors, and cliffy rocks, in the rains of the end of September, and of commencing October. I was drenched, chilled, colded, fevered. I could enjoy no distant prospects. Fogs hung over the mountains: cataracts poured down their sides.

*Chear.* This, then, was the very time to enjoy to advantage, the only things in the scenery, on account of which a visit to the Highlands of Scotland is interesting. Go thither when the lakes have shrunk considerably within their banks, when the channels of the mountain-torrents are dry, when no fogs hover on the brows of the hills, when the forests do not hang down their heads dripping with rains, when Desolation does not, as it were, visibly brood

over the heath:—you might as well stay away!—The objects of true interest in those Highlands are such as can have their interest heightened to the utmost, only by the rains and storms of declining Autumn and coming Winter. We go not there to contemplate softened beauty. It is the wild, the desolate, the sublime, that we go out to see. We go to enjoy such scenery, and to have such sentiments excited in our minds, as those of the poems of Ossian! When the Scots treated you, as you relate,—they did the honours of their country, as handsomely as possible, in your favour. However you may, now, take pains to persuade yourself, that you were unfortunate in the excursion; I cannot but think, that when it took place, you must have been unable to resist that expansion and elevation of mind which it was natural for such scenery, in such a season, to produce!

*Tes.* Why, Sir, a man may not be sorry to have for once witnessed an execution, recovered out of a fever, or to have been, by the methods of the Humane

Society, restored from the suspension of his animation by drowning. Yet, it is not therefore, to be supposed, that he found a delight in the drowning, the fever, or the execution.

(C. 6.)

*Sen.* But, if one walked to see those bogs and mountains,—with but a single shirt beside that on his back, and it forgot at a distant inn,—his *small-clothes* galled before and behind,—his shoes torn till they would scarce stick on his feet,—his stockings chafed to tatters,—his feet bruised, inflamed, and excoriated as if they had been worse than parboiled alive;—should you find a Comfort in this?—I can scarce think it. And yet, this is what, in fact, ensues to those multitudes of pedestrian tourists who swarm out over the land, in holiday times.

*Chear.* Nay; even in this there is a pride. It is a triumph to the Connoisseur, thus to make himself the *martyr* of taste, liberal curiosity, and elegant enthusiasm. At every new rent in his garments, he con-

siders himself to gain a new claim to honour. Every blister on his toes, seems to give him new consequence, as an admirer of heath and gravel. Every time he turns his eye on his shirt, he feels so much the more elated—the blacker he discovers it to be. And, these Comforts of dirtiness and fatigue, are the greater, in proportion as the persons undergoing them, have been previously the less accustomed to any thing but finical cleanliness and luxurious ease.—To tell the tale of enterprizes so disastrous and heroic, proves, afterwards, the most irresistible recommendation to the favour of one Desdemona after another.—Besides, any thing—any thing—rather than nurse spleen, and languish in *ennui!* Any walking or other exercise is Comfort, in comparison with the pain of finding the stream of life to stagnate, and existence to become an intolerable burthen!—

*Tes.* True! true! Hence, I will frankly own to you, it does me good to complain. And, should you, CHEARFUL and MERRYFELLOW, succeed, as I am half afraid you may, to argue and banter me out of all

my complaints;—I shall, certainly, have reason to say, with the Drama-mad citizen of Argos—*Pol! me occidistis, amici!*

*Merry.* A truce with complaints. Let us rather join Mrs. Testy at the Card-table.

*Tes.* Willingly;—on condition that you consent, all three, to pass the night, here; and that we have a walk by moonlight, to try—what Comforts, Cynthia's influence can exalt our heads to think of?

*Chear.* I guess, that I may assent to your proposition, as well in the names of our two friends, as for myself.

*Sen.* Certainly. A walk by moonlight, will be agreeable and quite romantic. It will be most pleasing, then, to speak of more of the Comforts of Life, and to muster them, till we shall learn wholly to forget its Miseries.

# DIALOGUE THE SIXTH.

## PERSONAL COMFORTS.

*Testy, Sensitive, Chearful, and Merryfellow.*

*Scene*—TESTY'S GARDEN.

*Chearful.*

HOW pleasing this unclouded serenity of the sky! this tranquil diffusion of softened light! the depth, the contrast, and the strongly marked outlines of the shadows! the tremulous dancing of the moon's lustre on those fields towards *Pentonville!* The branches waving as the western breeze rises or subsides; the movements of a few cattle here and there; the shadows of some scattered wanderers of the human species; the barkings of so many dogs; the

rattling of carriages on the roads; the glimmer of lights from a few windows around the amphitheatre, with something of a glow-worm effect; that chaos of humming noises, with many a discordant jar, which ascends through the mass of darkness over London; with the faint yet curiously lucid fringing, on the edges of the immense and lowering cloud; produce an inexpressibly soothing, chearing, elevating effect upon the mind, giving it a turn to pensiveness, or even to a degree of placid, tender melancholy.

*Sen.* I have been ever fond of walks by moon-light. My mind has been generally soothed, in them, in the first instance, to a not disagreeable pensiveness. But, the solitary meditation has turned insensibly, upon the vanity of human things, the miseries of mortal life, the powers of that Destruction which is incessantly preying on the forms of all material existences! It has then, usually ended in fixing my thoughts upon my own PERSONAL MISERIES! Pray, Gentlemen, let us hear what you have to say of PERSONAL COMFORTS?

(C. 1.)

*Chear.* Why, Sir, every faculty, every organ, every power you have, is an inlet of comfort! It is absolutely your own fault, if Eyes, Ears, Nose, Mouth, Nerves or Skin convey aught but agreeable and salutary perceptions to the mind. Your ideas of Consciousness may, with your own good pleasure, be rendered ever pleasing. The exercise of Memory tends perpetually to renovate and to heighten all our joys. Curiosity aims ever at an acquisition of knowledge which is the genuine and natural enjoyment of the understanding. The comparisons and discriminations of the Reason, Understanding, or Judgment, are in all circumstances, *radically,* agreeable. Your feelings of sympathy with whether the joys or the sorrows of others, have constantly, in them, something of pleasing self-complacency. Every energy of the fancy, gives a distinctly felt satisfaction. There is not a single effort of any power which Man possesses, but is, by the very consciousness of its being an

effort of power, agreeable. One has, from nature, or by the aid of art, the means to exclude every access of those things which might to sense or sentiment, become, in any manner painful! You shut the eyes: you cleanse the mouth: you throw away whatever offends the touch, or withdraw from it: you move away from disagreeable sounds or offensive smells—if you may not have them put from you otherwise. Nature has so accommodated all the organs, powers, and faculties of man, to one another, and to his general condition in life and society, that every one of them is, in its native soundness and proper exercise, a spring of genuine Comfort—and of Comfort only. What is more—there is not an imperfection of the senses nor of the mental faculties and feelings, out of which the human mind is not framed to educe to itself, certain Comforts either of reality or of delusion! Not a cross accident occurs, but there is a natural disposition in the human soul to draw good out of it. If one poet have observed

"—ut nemo quam sibi sortem
" Seu ratio dederit, seu fors objecerit, illâ
" Contentus vivat." Hor.

Another has as shrewdly madê it a poetical maxim, that

" Whate'er the passion, knowledge, fame, or pelf,
" No one would change his neighbour for himself."
Pope.

(C. 2.)

*Tes.* A HUMP-BACK! What Comfort is there in that species of decrepitude?

*Merry.* A prodigious deal! Who more chatty—who more conceited of their personal appearance—who more lively in wit and discernment—than the *little My Lords?* The hump appears to the little fellow that bears it, as if it were a knapsack in which he had bundled up all his cares, his follies, his absurdities, his ugliness, and cast them behind him. It seems that very bag of the faults peculiar to one's self, which the Grecian Fabulist relates that Jupiter allowed man to cast behind his back, while he took full in sight before him, the satchel blown up with the faults of others. He

who can earn nothing with his hands, may get a fortune by lending out his *Hump*, if he have one, for a portable writing-desk. It is well known what wealth a little My Lord got, at Paris, during the famous Mississipi rage, by putting his *Hump* to advantageous use, in this way! A Hump is something that, by making a man particular, draws the notice of the world upon him: Now, whatever happens to have this effect, never fails to prove the means of making a fortune. The man, for instance, who was known in Leadenhall-Street, by the name of *Dirty Dick*, drew the notice of the publick, and of consequence, great sales and gains, by the dirtiness alone of his shop and person. And it is the same with every remarkable peculiarity.—A peerage conferred by the King, has perhaps, nothing in it more gratifying than the address of "*My Lord!*" But, he whom Nature has honoured with a Hump on his shoulders, needs no royal creation, to enable him to have his ears constantly soothed with this high and flattering address.—To perform great things with means

comparatively trivial and inadequate—is ever the pride of human ability: Now, who that sees the puny hunchback, would expect of him to become the father of a vigorous, manly progeny, all perfect and erect in their shapes? Yet, have I seen as fine a family of young men as the island ever produced, the sons of a little ricketty father, whose hump was almost equal in bulk, to all the rest of his body:—He was naturally much more proud of having begotten such sons, than if he had been himself a form as manly and faultless as any one of them. The excrescence of a Hump on the shoulders, too, is not a deficiency. It is, on the contrary, something more bestowed by Nature on him who bears it, than the same Nature gives to others. He is, therefore, to take it, as something vouchsafed him, that is more than his due; and to look upon it, as a mark, that he is the peculiar favourite of the Power from whose plastic hand his frame has proceeded. At the worst of his case, too,—amidst whatever reproaches shall be cast out against him,—the hunch-

back may still take comfort to himself, and boast, that he is not splay-footed, nor blear-eyed, nor lame in his hands, nor loaded with a polypus on his nose, nor with a wen on his neck!—Besides, it is remarkable, that persons who are hump-backed, have, usually, a corresponding conformation of the breast, by which their voices are rendered particularly mellow and sonorous. Their speech, their music, are eminently strong and agreeable. One shall be called, perhaps, the little Nightingale; another, the musical Stentor!—An advantage, one of the most enviable among all the endowments upon which men value themselves!—But, I should never have done, if I were to recount all the Comforts peculiar to the Hump-backed.

*Sen.* Oh! you have said quite enough upon this subject. I am entirely satisfied.

(C. 3.)

*Tes.* NATIVE BLINDNESS! What are its Comforts?

*Merry.* Have you forgotten the old

blind philosopher's question of consolation—"*Are there no pleasures in the dark?*"—He who is born blind, escapes numberless sights, which are accounted sights of woe. He sees not the *altered eye of hard unkindness.* He gazes not his soul away, in the hopeless love and admiration of female beauty. He is more capable of the *Nil admirari* of Horace, than if he had full enjoyment of sight, that sense which is the chief inlet of admiration to the soul. He is not apt to conceive disgust or prejudice against any one, on account merely of an ugly face or an ill-shaped person. He is not subject to be more afraid of ghosts and hobgoblins by night than by day. He has the felicity, when a boy, to escape the whole torture of poring over School-books, Greek, Latin, or English. His other Senses, those of touch and hearing especially, gain a ten-fold augmentation of sensibility, in consequence of this want of the perceptions of sight: And, since it is to the Touch we owe some of our most exquisite sensible enjoyments; who would not, to improve that, willingly

forfeit all the advantages of vision?—What sensibility to sweet sounds, do not the blind universally possess? How easily do they acquire skill to educe ravishing melody from almost every instrument of music? To be blind from infancy, is, almost always, the same thing as to be born with divine genius for music: It is almost to be sure of getting a fortune by music. It renders a musical voice, all that is lovely and rapture-giving to the mind. Had *Jean Jacques Rousseau* been blind;—he would never have experienced that disappointment of enraptured expectation at the Charity-School at Venice, which he describes in his *Confessions.* He heard the young girls sing, without having opportunity to see their faces: The voices, the song, were divine: His soul was ravished: He could not imagine but that their forms must be heavenly as their voices: He was an age gone in the wildest delirium of love: Admitted to see them—he found that one was lame, another scarred with the small pox, a third blind of an eye, a fourth crooked like an S, a fifth with a humped

back and a protuberant breast: He was shocked beyond expression: He returned home in horror, as if he had seen something unnatural: Nor could he, ever after, drive from his mind, the ugly, unpleasant remembrance:—He would ten times rather have wanted his eyes for that bout, than have been so provokingly undeceived by them!—The memory is usually much improved by the want of sight. The impressions which it receives are fixed deep. They are not lost amidst that tumult of perceptions which embarrasses the mind which has the benefit of sight. They are more simply and intimately connected, one with another. They are more endeared to the fancy and the feelings, than if the diversity of perceptions for these to work upon, were greater. A blind person remembers with a tenacity of recollection, and a minuteness of circumstances, which can seldom be rivalled by the memory of one that sees. There is, very often, something most interestingly tender, affectionate, ingenuous, and pensive, in the temper and character of blind men, which gives

them a peculiar hold on the affections of a parent, friend, or mistress. It rarely happens, that a blind man is not much a favourite among the women of his own degree. I have known more than one or two such, whom the loveliest woman of their acquaintance preferred to crowds of lovers in all other respects the most engaging. You know I lived at Edinburgh, in the house of the late amiable Dr. THOMAS BLACKLOCK: And it was not only on my affections, but on those of almost every intelligent person who came much about him, that the sweetness of his temper, the gentleness of his manners, the ardent benignity of his heart, his simple, artless, enlightened rectitude, the variety of his learning and talents, the vivacity of his fancy, the innocent gaiety of his conversation, and the unaffected enthusiasm and rapture of his piety, acted with the force of an irresistible spell to bewitch affection, and fix the tenderest friendship. Never man was more tenderly beloved by his friends: Never friend, more faithful or affectionate to those whose kindness his

good qualities had engaged. The recollection of BLACKLOCK brings it into my mind to remark—how blindness has power to triumph over all its natural disadvantages, even in regard to the Poetry of visible objects! The powers of his memory were evinced in the diversity of his erudition, and in his wonderful command of the language both of poetry and of prose-eloquence. Now, in both his poetry and his prose, he would introduce, with propriety, and even with picturesque energy, images and colours of local description, of which he could have no representatives in his fancy, and which he could know only as a sort of mysterious signs, pleasing by their association with words and with thoughts otherwise agreeable. Very extraordinary must have been the power of mind, that could so combine the elements of local description, without having had visual knowledge of them.—The blindness is enviable, that derives from necessity, such an improvement of the human powers. In truth I can scarce, at this moment, recollect to have known a blind

man that had not something extraordinary about him,—that was not, in fact, a man of genius. Go to the Institutions for the education of the Indigent Blind—you shall be astonished at the ingenuity of their manufactures! I remember, as the friend and frequent visitor of BLACKLOCK, the blind Dr. MOYES, who still lives in the enjoyment of a competent fortune which he acquired, as a Lecturer in Experimental Philosophy! MOYES could dress his own hair as handsomely as any hair-dresser: and he used to perform every other little personal service for himself, as neatly and readily as any one that had the perfect use of sight.—In truth, when we particularly enquire into the case of the Blind,—one would almost think,—that it is with the senses, as with pecuniary opulence or the grandeur of ambition,—and that by the want of sight as by the want of either of those envied advantages,—one is only put so much the more in the way to distinguish one's self by genuine virtue, ability, and those other excellencies which prove the true springs of comfort!—One

thing more, the remembrance of BLACKLOCK brings it into my mind to add. Privation of the Sight of external things, puts one's knowledge of present things, so much upon a level with that knowledge by faith alone which we have of the future joys and sufferings of Christianity, that a Blind Man is likely to be a much more lively and sincere believer, than are those who see. It was remarkably so with BLACKLOCK. He thought of Heaven with almost as much vivacity of apprehension, as of the things of this sublunary world and of social life. I witnessed his conduct, at the near approach of his last hour. He died of an inflammatory fever, after a short illness. He met death, *actually*, with the serenity, chearfulness, and even joy of a person emancipated from *Trenck's* dungeon at Spandau, into sudden liberty, enjoyment, and honour!—But, one more advantage of Blindness—and I have done.—Have you ever witnessed the new feelings of a person blind from his birth, when, by surgical aid, the perceptions of light were let suddenly in upon his sensorium? You

have, at least, all, read Cheselden's famous description of the indications by which a young man whose eyes he couched, made known his first sensations and emotions after the new light was let in upon him. To acquire a new science; to make one's self master of a new language, rich in amusement and instruction; to see a scene of squalid desolation, suddenly clothed with fertility and beauty; to grasp any important truth which one has long anxiously sought without success; to find an host of gathering difficulties vanish, even as the clouds are dissipated by a thunder-storm; gives to the mind a high rapture of new delight. But, it is nothing that even these can give, in comparison with that new world which opens on the blind man when new day is poured suddenly upon his eyeballs. Has he become previously weary of the sameness of life? The novelty of existence, fresh even as at the hour of his birth, is suddenly renovated to him. His pleasure is a sort of resemblance and anticipation of that which awaits the saints in passing from earth to heaven He receives a profusion of new

ideas: and every one of these becomes by its novelty, and by its association with the other ideas of sight, and with his former ideas derived both from Sight and from the other Senses, a source of joy.

*Sen.* Pray, quit this serious subject. Your conversation, in expatiating upon it, becomes too melancholy and too solemnly sentimental. The discussion is, indeed, not unpleasing. But, the pleasure is of that sober, affecting cast, which diffuses itself over the mind, in speaking of a departed friend for whose loss we have ceased to sorrow with agony, though we still remember his virtues and his kindness with fond regret!——

(C. 4.)

*Merry.* What think you of the Comfort of Personal UGLINESS?

*Tes.* Oh! pray, let me know it? I could never yet get much in love with this unlucky phiz of mine. And though Mrs. Testy's good-nature was, at length, enticed to endure it; I can assure you that she shunned me, in the beginning of my courtship, as if I had been the very monster of

the tale of *Beauty and the Beast*, or even the *Bull of Beverland* himself!

*Merry.* Ha! ha! ha! Mr. Testy! Should we even allow you the merit of deserving to become President of the Ugly Club; it will be impossible to pity you in your ugliness. You know how to make merry with it. I'll warrant, you cannot see your own features in a mirrour, without laughing. You, if you chose, might describe, better than any one, the Comforts of being ugly.

*Tes.* Nay, Mr. Merryfellow, be assured, those Comforts cannot be beyond the range of your own experience. You, at least, have not personal beauty to render you uncomfortable. Not a Lady of your acquaintance, will so far flatter you, as to say that you have. So, proceed! muster before us the Comforts of Ugliness!

*Merry.* Why! Is it not a Comfort to be free from all the petty solicitudes and toils which the consciousness of personal beauty subjects us to? To brush the teeth twenty times a day; to comb the eyebrows as often; to watch perpetually the

changes in the lustre of the eyes, and the flittings of colour in the complexion—what puny, unmanly cares, these?—and yet, how apt they are to engross the mind of a pretty master-miss-youth,—and even to keep it, continually, in a fret?—An ugly fellow is free from all these cares. He thinks of his person as little as possible: and, when he *does* take any pains with it—that is merely for the sake of indispensible cleanliness and secret Comfort.—Beautiful faces are very often unmeaning; and fine persons, deficient in agility, and in active vigour. It is ugliness, or something very near to ugliness, that is the most compatible with strong, manly expression in a countenance: and it is the thickset, broad, coarse form that is usually the most remarkable for active strength. Personal elegance and beauty are flowers which very quickly fade: and the memory of them is a pain to all the subsequent life of him who has lost them. The fading of ugliness is but the withering of a thistle, the decay of a nettle, the crushing of a toadstool, the extirpation of a *mugwort*, the cutting

down of a knarled birch or crab-thorn. He, to whom this change comes, joys in it: He feels, for the moment, as if he were dropping a mask, which he had sometimes felt awkwardly reluctant to wear before company. He has the pleasure to find, as he grows older, that the difference between the ugly face and the handsome one, is, every day diminished. If he was weak enough to be mortified in thinking of his ugliness; he is happy to find its disadvantages to vanish gradually. Was he little concerned about the cast of his phiz? He can, however, suffer no uneasiness on account of any effect of growing years upon it, unless it become, by age, less powerfully comic. It is curious to observe, though the observation be one often made, that an ugly face is very generally the sign hung out over a witty humorous mind. It suggests innumerable exhilarating witticisms to the wearer himself: and it is a cause of wit to others, even if the wearer should make nothing of it. It is so much the genuine guise of humour, that he, whom nature has favoured with it, cannot more easily resist

temptations to humour when they come before him, than could the Cat, in the Fairy Tale, while a fine lady, resist her old appetite for mousing when a mouse came in her way. There is scarce a merry, shrewd, witty fellow, even in fictitious history, but has the honour of ugliness attributed to him. Æsop was, you know, a very ugly little Crouchback. Uglier still, was Socrates, not less a wit and a man of humour, than a philosopher. The heroes of Rabelais were eminent for personal ugliness. Sancho Panza, his master, and Rosinante were, in their several conditions, absolutely patterns of this interesting qualification. Hudibras and Ralpho are still more conspicuously ugly. Falstaff, Bardolph, Ancient Pistol, and almost every other character of wit and humour in the whole Drama of Shakspeare, are eminently ugly. Horace was a little punch of a fellow whose countenance had no beauty in it, but that it was ever shining with wit, good-fellowship, and good-humour. Scarron, the favourite wit of France, at one time, was one of the most deformed little

figures that ever a lovely woman allowed herself to be matrimonially coupled to. On the English stage, it appears something out of nature, and therefore disgusting, for wit or humour to come from any one that has not the garnish of ugliness to set it off, and make it go down. Wit, humour, and gaiety contribute so much to the charms of social converse, and are the springs of so large a proportion of all which is interesting in it, that I know not who would not purchase their advantages even at the expence of almost any imaginable diminution of personal charms. What amusement is there not to be derived from any thing peculiarly ugly about the Nose? Is your Nose excessively long? Comfort yourself with the reflexion, that you have fared as well as if you had been to the promontory of Noses. It is the proboscis of an elephant, an instrument of nice sensation, and a type of peculiar wisdom. It is the *Suspensus Nasus* which the Romans held to be so remarkable an indication of acute delicacy in the perception of the ridiculous.

*Sen.* Enough! Enough! *Nil me pœnitet hujus Nasi.* You have satisfied me, that my nose is of the best of all possible figures. Sometimes, when in my walking meditations, I have struck it against a post,—or when I have secretly felt it prudent to suppress my resentment of impertinence lest an impudent short-nosed fellow should seize me by it,—I have suffered a wish to cross my mind that Nature had given me half an inch less of Nose. But, after hearing what you have just represented,—I would not exchange Noses,—no, not with old Mr. Shandy himself!

*Tes.* But, my short Nose! Have you nothing to say in its favour? Persuade me, if you can, that it is the very pride of my existence, the charm of my life, the glory, the dial-cock of my countenance?

*Chear.* Why, you know, Mr. Testy, that what is little is, always, esteemed to be smart and pretty. Almost all the words, in every language, which express remarkable diminutiveness, are expressive also of fondness or of merry satisfaction. A small hand, a little foot, a little mouth are

thought personal beauties—why not likewise, a little snubbed nose? The little finger, the little toe, and every other organ of the body, remarkable for littleness, are particular favourites. In any dangers and hair-breadth escapes of the face, an humble nose like yours, is not much more exposed than your cheeks or your chin. You may twist and pinch, and pull it, and expose it to a thousand perils of soap and a furious adversary's gripe, without fearing lest it should be stretched out to deformity. A pimple, a wart, a polypus, by enlarging, only beautify it. It is ever brisk, alert, erect, and upon the *qui vive.*—It affords a shortened passage to the brain. It does not put you to the same expence for clean handkerchiefs, as if your nose were larger. And as it is a perfection in Nature, to accomplish all her ends, with the smallest possible waste of means; why should you not be delighted to find yourself adorned with a true natural Nose, at so small an expenditure of flesh and blood? Besides, if, with a nose such as yours, a man should fall into a misfortune not to be remedied with-

out the aid of Taliacotius's art, and of a fresh steak from a living porter's bum;—a smaller steak will be sufficient,—and there is less danger of the surgeon's miscarriage in the operation,—than if it was a nose as large as a Phallus-figured Spring Pincushion of pink silk, that was to be restored! Such noses as yours, Sir, are well known to have been much admired among the Romans, as a sure proof that the wearer was a person of shrewd discernment, and of quick, lively, sarcastic wit. You remember the *acutis naribus* of Horace.

*Sen.* But, for all this, you cannot deny, Gentlemen, that all the world are perpetually anxious to be as little Ugly as possible?

*Merry.* Quite the contrary! All mankind, aye and women, too, are in perpetual toil to render themselves as Ugly as possible. We eat, to fatten our bellies out of all proportion; and to swell our features to the appearances of pig's cheeks and bull's faces. Do we not drink to render our bodies dropsical, our eyes dead in the sockets, our noses fiery, our cheeks pallid

and flaccid as a bit of spoiled tripe moistened in water,—and yet starred with pimples? We change the modes of cutting and dressing our hair, and the fashions of our wigs, twenty times—almost within the year: and at every change, we ingeniously contrive that the new mode shall be, if possible, more at war with natural grace and beauty, than that which it has superseded. We court the favours of Mercury and Venus,—not for the sake of the raptures of love, or the brisk animation of wit,—but to taint the breath, to sap the nose, to blear the eye, to exchange the hair for a *Corona Veneris*, and for skeleton baldness, to wither and crumble down the bones, to cover the skin with blotches and sores, to prepare our living carcases for all the tortures and the deformity of leprosy, gout, and rheum!—What but an invincible passion for Ugliness, could engage us in such a conduct as this?—

And the WOMEN!—Their paint, their patches, and their rings,—what are these but the paraphernalia of Ugliness? They are never easy, till the teeth which Nature

gives are rotten in their mouths, or torn, fresh and sound, from the jaw:—and then they fill their cheeks with the worst substitutes, 'animal or mineral, which are to be found,—carrying about as much dead and putrefying matter within their living lips as possible. They pull down their ears with rings, for fear that those naturally charming ornaments of the head should produce their proper effect. They wear their hair in any fashion but that which is natural, simple, and becoming. Now with dirt, and now with acrid corrosive washes to remove it,—they contrive to parch and shrivel their skins, and to wither their bloom, long before the natural term of decay. They now paint their cheeks with *rouge*, and now with ratifia; in both instances, only to make the expression of the features, fierce or stupid. They expose their elbows, till these acquire the dusky red colour of an unboiled lobster's back. They evince no care to accommodate fashions in dress to their respective figures, years, and complexions: Each female adopts, for herself,

the common fashion, so blindly, and so implicitly, as to demonstrate, that solicitude to set off or improve her beauty has not any thing to do in the affair. The *men*, too, are quite of the same mind, as to female beauty and ugliness. The beauties are but playthings of an hour, admired, beloved, caressed but by the inexperienced and the fickle. But the Ugly are they who establish the surest dominion over men's hearts. You shall scarce find an uxorious husband, a *Jerry Sneak*, but has a wife of distinguished ugliness; or, among the more licentious, a *kind keeper*, the slave of his female companion, whose mistress is not ugly to a miracle.—It is not only in society highly civilized and refined, that the rage is so much more for Ugliness than for beauty. The savage, the barbarian, the simple peasant have, all, the same passion for Ugliness in themselves and others. How do *savages* squeeze the heads of their new-born infants, and distort their legs, and paint and mangle their countenances to aspects of hideousness? *Barbarians*, equally ambitious to be ugly, disfigure themselves

by dirtiness, and by awkward, inconvenient gorgeousness of apparel, if they do not absolutely hack their faces and maim their limbs for Ugliness's sake. There is in human nature, thus, throughout all its conditions, an aversion for beauty, and a passion for the opposite quality, which fully prove, that eminent Ugliness cannot but be to its possessor, one of the truest Comforts. Even our peasantry, of the most sequestered parts of the country, discover the same passion as others to disfigure themselves.

*Tes.* Well! You have said enough to reconcile me to my physiognomy,—if I could avoid looking in a glass when I shave myself—or if Mrs. Testy did not now and then, make me to bethink myself of it, by epithets of contempt.

(C. 5.)

*Sen.* DISEASE? Alas! You can never make that, in any of its forms, to appear a source of Comfort?

*Chear.* Why, if Disease be not absolutely a source of Comfort—it approaches,

in many instances, very near to that. There are occasions upon which the pangs of a diseased body have the effect to administer relief to a disturbed mind. Men have found a fit of the gout or the tooth-ach to operate as a joyful deliverance from an *ennui*, a *tædium* of existence, from the misery of which they were almost ready to fly to suicide. Under the horror of sudden and severe calamity, a friend of mine has told me, that he once found *relief* in what would, otherwise, have been the *tortures* of rheumatism. The sensations of a convalescent from a putrid or inflammatory fever, are so pleasing, and give such an idea of the renovation of existence with all the joys it is susceptible of, that one whose feelings were not before lively, would, undoubtedly, rather have had the fever, than want that new vivacity in all his energies of mind and body, which the consequences of the fever, bestow.—The *diseases* of children are serviceable, to moderate the impatience of their tempers, and to teach them compassion, fortitude, prudence, and patience. There is an in-

terchange of mutual tenderness between the person afflicted with disease, and those who nurse his illness, that often so much more than compensates for the pain and anxiety of the indisposition, as to change it into a Comfort. What poet is it, who reflects with complacency, that he had not "*known the madness of superfluous health?*" —He had good reason so to reflect. Strong, unbroken health, betrays those who enjoy it, into excesses and follies by which it becomes, often, a mischief, instead of a blessing. Sickliness is the nurse of humanity and of wisdom. It has been remarked, a thousand times, that they who are weak in health,—and are, therefore, obliged to avoid robust exercise, careless exposure to natural accidents, and every excess in convivial or sensual enjoyment,—usually live longer, and have more true enjoyment of existence, than those whom the bounty of nature tempts to imagine their constitutions too strong to be injured by any thing they themselves can do, to hurt them. We never learn the true secret of enjoyment, till we are taught it by Disease.

There is no possibility of subduing man by other means, to that prudence in the management of health, and the pursuit of pleasure, without which we can have no true Comfort in life.—What are our truest Comforts in mortal existence? Are they not those which we call the Domestic Ones? But, man, nor woman neither,—never settles to the study and relish of Domestic Comforts, —till the wild oats are sown—till the heyday of the blood is past—till he has received the frequent lessons of indisposition and disease. These are the Guides to whose care Nature commits him, to be by them conducted to the best happiness which is, in this world, within his reach. Besides, men seem to court Disease with one general consent. They abuse health with as much zeal and perseverance, as if it were an invaluable prize, to attain Disease. They use the means to get the gout, the stone, the rheum, with as active and steady diligence, as if those were their most interesting objects of pursuit. You can never persuade any man, that the same means will ruin his Constitution which have ruined

to death those of others, till he is actually in the gripe of the Disease which he pretended to despise while he was running upon it. Invent certain cures for any Diseases, or preventives—such as is Vaccination for the Small-Pox;—you shall find it almost impossible to persuade the world, within any reasonable time, to adopt them! Let Quacks, on the other hand, propose remedies, of the efficacy of which there can be little or no expectation:—All men shall contend--who to be the first to give his money for them,—and to trifle with the use of them. It should seem—as if men hated firm and secure health,—and as if they found a singular charm in the suspense and solicitudes of a condition in perpetual uncertainty between health and illness.—When is a lovely woman so truly lovely, as when in the flushed delicacy of feverish indisposition, and in the first softness of her convalescence from it?—Where Disease has not exalted the genius, refined the feelings, and given its lessons of wisdom, —it is seldom that man attains to the execution of any thing admirably great.—

Scarce a man of Genius has distinguished himself in any of the Arts particularly depending on the imagination, but had known much of indisposition and disease. How many of the best efforts of human ingenuity do we owe to the Gout? It is, I think, *Jean Jacques Rousseau*, that mentions the musical dreams which he had when he was almost in the delirium of a fever, as absolutely divine in comparison with any thing of which his waking genius was, in full health, capable!—Take Disease at once out of the world, with the means used to guard against it, with those persons whose profession is to live by it, with those things in our arts, manners, laws, trade, and manufactures, which have a respect to it—how little will there remain, to distinguish man from the brutes, or to render the affairs of social life at all interesting? Disease, too, has many privileges. The sickly child is ever the favourite of its mother, who, the more trouble and solicitude it gives, feels it to be so much the more endeared to her. We build palaces for the reception of such of

our sick, as are unable to find the necessary means of relief for themselves. In sickness, the mind is admitted to a converse with Heaven, to which it can, rarely, in full health, exalt itself—a converse which both elevates and refines the sentiments, while it gives a Comfort which nothing else in this world, can bestow!

(C. 6.)

*Sen.* I confess, that you have explained certain interesting advantages to be found in Sickness. You might, no doubt, enumerate a multitude of alleviations, of which its pain and melancholy are susceptible. But,—what of Death?

*Chear.* Why, cannot you be satisfied with the Epicure's consolation?—"I have "had my share of the good things of this "life; and, now I care not though I be "gone from it." It is time for the caterpillar to change its form, and soar aloft on new wings!—Who would chuse to live to the imbecility, the odiousness, and the satiety of sublunary existence which have been attributed to a Struldbrugg? Death,

—if not hastened by our own folly,—if not embittered by our consciousness of guilt,—seldom affects with agonies so severe, as many of those which have been experienced, and triumphantly endured in the progress of life. How many rush to it, voluntarily! How many boldly face it, in the field for a shilling a day! How many lay themselves placidly down in their beds, to receive it, as a kind and welcome friend? Since novelty and truth are so much the very food and sustenance of our intellectual powers; does not the change of Death promise of those, what must compensate ten thousand times for any agonies with which it may be accompanied?

*Tes.* I am not unwilling to receive your Consolations of Death. But, the subject is too austere for the general tenor of our present conversation. Better leave it with Drelincourt!

*Merry.* Yes! let us talk of those petty Comforts, which, though each be, in itself, trivial, yet, by their frequent recurrence, become highly important to the general happiness of life.

(C. 7.)

*Tes.* Well! what say you to the Comfort, for "a Lady in sewing," suddenly to "prick her finger, with the needle, to the "bone?"

*Merry.* Oh! she then shares the glories of that martyr to spinster-virtues, Queen Elizabeth's maid of honour, who died by the prick of a needle, and whose monument is the pride of Westminster Abbey! It awakens the Lady's attention, seasonably, to the work upon which she is busy. It affords her a good occasion to relax from such unceasing industry with her needle, if she began to be tired of it, and yet was ashamed to leave off! It is a seasonable and convenient blood letting,—if the circulation had begun, as often happens in sewing, to be impeded by the continual pressure on the tip of that finger! It presents an opportunity for that association of laughing and crying, both transient and momentary, which makes up so much of the gayest comedy and farce of life. What fair sempstress will, now, deny,

that, to wound her finger with her needle, is a Comfort?

*Tes.* "Hiccupping?"

(C. 8.)

*Merry.* A slight convulsive motion of the throat, so odd in its sensations and appearances, and so easily conquered, that it can excite nothing but gaiety!

(C. 3.)

*Tes.* "A pair of tight boots so fastened " on your legs by wetness, that it becomes " next to impossible to pull them off?"

*Merry.* An excellent opportunity to atchieve the praise of the *difficulté surmontée!* A summons to an exercise of address, force, patience, and perseverance, for your own relief, which promises you an improvement in these qualities, that shall give you, joy and pride in all your toil and awkward endurance! Besides, you may thus have occasion to eat your dinner or toy with your mistress, one boot on, another off, with all the grace of the heroic prince in the Rehearsal!

*Sen.* Very well! The Comfort you suggest is sufficiently on a level with the Misery which some have persuaded themselves, that they could not but suffer even from an incident so slight as this.—But, the night advances: the moon sinks behind a cloud: the damps of the evening, make themselves very sensible to my feelings. Let us return to the House; and retire to rest!

*Tes.* It is time.—Sleep is the most desirable Comfort we can now court.

# DIALOGUE THE SEVENTH.

## COMFORTS OF SOCIAL LIFE.

*Merryfellow, Testy, Sensitive, and Chearful.*

*Scene*—MERRYFELLOW'S CHAMBERS IN THE TEMPLE.

*Testy.*

MR. Merryfellow, your Chambers are commodious and elegant. There was no occasion for the apology with which you accompanied your invitation—as if you had been asking us to drink a glass of wine in an unfurnished cell, or in a garret.

*Sen.* Crown-Office-Row is, certainly, one of the most agreeable scenes of residence in the Temple, or even in all London and Westminster. The Garden, here,

immediately on the foreground,—the expanse of the river, and the incessant activity of which it is the scene,—the busy manufactures on the opposite side,—and, in the distance, the rising heights of the Surrey Hills,—compose a Summer prospect the most lively and interesting!

*Chear.* One turns the eyes with pleasure westward, to Westminster-Bridge, Mill-Bank, the Houses of Parliament, the Abbey, and the objects which offer themselves to notice, along that part of the river's winding course!

*Merry.* Eastward, the view is to my mind not disagreeable—if one have but a taste for the scenery of a river where commerce and population have long supplanted rural beauty. What think you of Blackfriars Bridge—of the grove of masts in the distance beyond,—of the mass, the diversity, the animation of those objects, as far as the eye can stretch its view, down the course of the stream?

*Sen.* Most interesting, all! The triumphs of human Art and Industry! The causes and the consequences of that civi-

lization and refinement which proceed from the union of men in society.

*Tes.* Well! are you and *Chearful,* now in the mind to oppose your notions of the Comforts of SOCIAL LIFE to our Sighs and Groans over its Miseries?

*Merry.* Oh! by all means.

(C. 1.)

Even the most *misanthropical* SOLITUDE derives from Social Life, that charm which the Man-hater who retires there, at first fancies himself to find in it. He has no enjoyment but in reflecting, with mingled tenderness and sulkiness, on the society he has quitted. He avails himself of his acquaintance with the arts and learning of society. He substitutes books for men; and has, in those, a company of the most respectable associates, who talk their best, and yet hold themselves ready to come and go implicitly at his command. He cannot even curse the mistress who has jilted or the friend that has betrayed him, without a reference of his sentiments to social life. Never was any thing happier, in the deli-

neation of human manners, than Johnson, in describing his Hermit, in the Prince of Abyssinia, as impatient, after a certain time, of his favourite solitude, and about to return the next day, into society. I could wager you, that even Simon Stylites, when he stood year after year, without change of posture, on a solitary pillar, thought of human society full as much as of Heaven, in that strange seclusion. Put the fiercest misanthrope alive into solitary confinement—you shall find him court the familiarity of a mouse, a rat, or a spider, and study to win the kindness of such creatures—precisely because he finds them to be not unsusceptible of some of the most endearing social sentiments of human nature.—The first Comfort of Social Life—is, to know that even Solitude would,—in no circumstances, and to no imaginable humour of human character,—have charms, without a continual reference to Society.

(C. 2.)

*Chear*. How very soon an infant learns to take delight in Society! His

pleasure at sight of his mother or his nurse, is almost the first sentiment that becomes habitual in his mind,—

"Incipe, parve puer, risu cognoscere matrem,"—

Says Virgil, with admirable beauty and accuracy of observation. Whether he cry at a stranger's approach; or upon occasions of alarm, cling, "still close and closer to the mother's breast:"—his dependence upon Society, and his sense of its power to Comfort, are alike displayed.—As his mind expands, he gains increased knowledge and happiness, chiefly by becoming still more and more the creature of Society. He learns little of unintelligent nature, in comparison with what he learns of men. He personifies, in his mind, all Nature, to give it the interesting power of human Society to him. He builds mimic houses; and, in fancy, puts families of human inhabitants in them. He perhaps fancies himself at the head of a little army, and imagines the presence of a rival host opposed to that which he leads. He readily embraces those tales of vulgar superstition which people all nature with unseen

myriads of fairies, ghosts, good angels, and evil spirits. He courts with eagerness the friendship of as many other persons, young and old, as he can get access to. He seems not even to live but in converse with beings of intelligence and affections like his own. He fondles young animals—birds, lambs, calves, dogs, ponies, cats, even trouts, and mice—and strives to render them tame, and to win their attachment—all for the sake only of social qualities like those of men, which he discovers or fancies himself to discover in them. Can there be proofs more unequivocal, that social existence is the very basis of all the Comforts of which it is within the fate of human beings to taste?

(C. 3.)

*Sen.* How great the Comforts of Artificial EDUCATION! They are Comforts peculiar to Society; and the most perfect in its most refined state.—The mother who, if she do not suckle her child, yet lives with the infant, and watches over it, as constantly as possible, enjoys a felicity in this exercise of affection, which nothing

out of Society could have communicated. The infant, in attaching itself still more and more to its mother and its nurse, learns to know the charm of natural affection; and has, thus, the first germ planted in its breast, of all those joys which the gentle and tender affections are to give throughout life. The diversities of Society, as they present themselves, in the progress of Education, still more and more, to the opening mind, engage and gratify curiosity; and while they invigorate and enrich the mind, prove to it, so many springs of perpetual Comfort. The pleasure which the novelties of physical nature yield to the juvenile observer, is nothing, absolutely nothing, in comparison with that which he finds in contemplating those diversities of human fortune and character which are, only in social life, presented to him.—The *restraints* which Artificial Education imposes, are among its Comforts. They are the springs of many a Comfort. They prevent the boy from knowing that satiety of free idleness and of amusement which would destroy the charm of them for ever. They form him

to a steadiness of design and of application, to which he is to owe much of the most substantial happiness of his future life. They gradually endow him with conscious energies of patience, fortitude, and vivid attention, by which he finds himself formed to manly force and usefulness of character. The *sports*, the most pleasing, of the age of artificial education, are, all, such as derive their charm from being social; and give, every one, the liveliest delight. Emulation, in tasks of learning, and in sports, is the occasion of almost all the joyous fervid activity which the young, at this period display—but, it is a sentiment that, out of society, could never be experienced.—Even the vexations and unlucky incidents which cross the boy, from time to time, amid his early lessons and diversions, are changed by the power of Society, into matters of gaiety. He takes a pride in bearing them with spirit, that he may not be despised for feebleness and timidity. He affects to laugh over them with his fellows: and the very attempt has almost power to render them subjects of irresistible merriment. The moment they

have passed, they are forgotten, because the bustle of juvenile amusement soon drives them away from the light and sanguine heart hitherto unpractised in the art of enhancing its miseries. They become, afterwards, with all the other events of our boyish years, subjects of agreeable recollection. The tasks of instruction, generally more or less enlivened by emulation and curiosity, come to please, every day more, by the knowledge and skill which we are conscious of deriving from them. These, with our amusements, and our confinement to the discharge of moral duties, our views of exterior nature, and our voluntary study and imitation of human example, compose the whole of our education. They have, all, the closest reference to Society. In the Season of Life when we are immediately busied in them,—they hold our fancy, memory, understanding, senses, and passions, all in the liveliest play of happy activity. When that season is over,—and we turn from the tasks of education, and the boyish sports that diversified them,—to the business of civil life,—we find often our truest joy in recol-

lecting them, and renewing them. We take a pleasure in meeting an old school-fellow, after many years separation, which is one of the liveliest the human heart is capable of. The books which we read at school, and at college, become the favourite companions of all our following life: We read them, year after year, with fresh delight: And to have read many books of instruction and entertainment when one was very young, is, to have acquired almost the richest of all treasures for future Comfort. We review, with social affection, the scenes where our early sports were followed, and our early instruction received. Even in old age, to try one of the Games in which we delighted when at school, will often give back almost all our boyish sprightliness and activity.—Such are the Comforts which the Education of Social Life bestows! Are not these, sufficient to endear society, as the source of satisfaction, which, even alone, would leave no just reason to whine and murmur over life, as abandoned to almost unmixed misery?

(C. 4.)

*Tes.* But, what Comfort has a School-boy when he is called to his task from a game at "Dog and Hare," or any similar diversion in which he is engaged with the keenest eagerness of spirits?

*Merry.* He has the benefit of being seasonably withdrawn from overheating himself. He derives from this, immediate Comfort; though perhaps, he may not be over-sensible of it. And, it tends to preserve his health for future activity in the same and other sports. Had he been allowed to exhaust his force and ardour, all at once in the sport;—he would have been disgusted with it. But, being compelled to break away from it in the middle; he will return to it, with augmented satisfaction, the very first moment he can escape from his tasks. This secret was well known to the writer of Hudibras, who, to heighten the interest of the story of the Bear and Fiddle, took care, that it should break off in the middle. It was well known, also, to the Writers of Don Quixote and of Gil Blas, who so often interrupt the thread of a story, while the

reader's curiosity is in full gallop for the end of it; nor resume that thread, till after a very considerable interval. Besides, the boy, if of a sullen humour, can revenge himself, *very comfortably*, on his master, by being very sulky over his lesson. If his temper be generous, manly, and sanguine; he triumphs in a different way; and, endeavouring to master his task with rapidity, that it may return him to his sports; is insensibly warmed to an ardent delight in it, that more than makes amends for the lost pleasure of his out-of-doors diversion.

(C. 5.)

*Sen.* But, is it not, the extreme of misery to luckless boys and girls, "when "pedantic parents or teachers, with some "smattering knowledge, but with not one "grain of shrewd common sense, insist "upon making all their sports, lessons of "profound reason and philosophy; their "cards, books of Geography and History; "their flying of kites, experiments in "electricity?"

*Chear.* Thus unseasonably to harrass children with a language of abstract ideas, which their minds have not been before prepared to invent or entertain, is, indeed exceedingly foolish. But, it is seldom much an annoyance to the children. The ridicule of the attempt easily strikes their minds, and makes them find amusement in the absurd pains of the unskilful teacher. Sometimes, new imagery and new relations are brought thus into view, which may take the attention even of idle, waggish children. And, in this case, the reason is agreeably improved, and the inventive faculties are pushed into activity. When the pupil is not amused either in seriousness or in frolic; he has the Comfort of escaping, in fancy, from the scene; and is, of course, not so much a sufferer as a gainer in amusement, by the annoying and unseasonable philosophy of his instructor. The only case in which he can be truly a loser by the matter, is, when, without due intelligence, he fancies, that he can enter into it; and becomes *con amore*, an unenlightened smatterer in

science, a mere Hocus Pocus dealer in experiments, the very fool of words, like his master. Oh! how I have sometimes been impatient to break the heads of old fools, who were teizing children to death with the repetition of terms which they did not themselves understand,—and in regard to which the Children had no intermediate ideas by the aid of which to seize them,—as clear illustrations in philosophy! Oh! how I dislike a boy that is scarce sooner in breeches than he begins to figure as a parrot of pedantry or philosophy!—

(C. 6.)

*Tes.* "The teizings of a Dancing-Mas-"ter, insisting on a boy or a girl to turn "out the toes, to hold up the head, and "to beat time with the steps to the mu-"sic?"—

*Merry.* Oh! in this case, the importance of the personage and of his instructions, cannot fail of reconciling the little pupil to every injunction he gives! Every lesson, however otherwise teizing, is com-

fortable as a preparation for the joys of a dancing-school ball.

(C. 7.)

*Tes.* "A raw young lad from a remote "country-school with jealous, delicate "feelings, but an entire stranger to the "ways of the world,—harrassed to death "by the waggish mischief of his compa-"nions at college?"

*Sen.* Ah! that was my fate!

*Chear.* Ah! and it was mine! But, you know, how I triumphed over it!

*Sen.* Not I!—I was too much occupied with my own distresses and chagrins, to waste a thought upon those of others.

*Chear.* While the rogues, of whom I think Testy was one, did with you, as did the withered old man, in the Arabian Tale, who persuaded the traveller to take him upon his shoulders, then squeezed the luckless bearer, about the neck, almost to suffocation, and would not suffer him afterwards to lay down his burthen, or to move, but as the rider pleased;—I, on the contrary, rather made myself merry

with the tricks directed against myself; and thus became able to baffle them all; and to retaliate them, with more than equal force, upon their authors.—The first attempts of our merry young friends were upon my dress. There they were successful. They persuaded me to crop my long queue, to comb my front hair over my eyes, to alter the cut of my whiskers, to bedaub myself with oat-meal for hair-powder, to hang my head over the left shoulder, and to wear my boots and gaiters in a fashion incomparably ridiculous. I was unconscious of the ridicule; and thought, that I was thus rendered by my friends' kindness, a young sprig of fashion, even within the first ten days, after my arrival in Edinburgh. The Secret was quickly whispered round: And none of my fellows met me in the streets but with an ambiguous smile on his countenance, which was changed instantaneously into bursting laughter. At last, the ridicule was too strong to escape even my own notice. I corrected what was the most extravagant in my dress; and to the

essential benefit of my studies, gave up all pretensions to fashion. I could not, for many months after, hold up my head in the presence of any one of those before whom I had begun to strut as a beau. But, the authors of my shame, failed not to distinguish me by the appellation of Beau Chearful, for the rest of the winter. —Those same lads of humour were never again able to ensnare me into any similar folly. But, I was assailed by others who conceived, that merriment might be extracted, in a different way, out of my ingenuous simplicity. They misinformed me, of purpose, in regard to the wishes of the professors and the rules of the college. They excited me to write essays of both poetry and prose on occasions absurdly ridiculous. They engaged me in laughable contests of literary emulation with others who were equally butts of their mischievous humour. Nay, I remember, I was once silly enough to allow myself to be persuaded to try the Laputan method of mastering a difficult proposition in Euclid—to reduce the leaf of my book that contained

it, to a powder, and to swallow it in a glass of water, on a morning, fasting. At another time, I was enticed to believe; that, in the neighbourhood of London, somewhere, and on the banks of the Thames, a young man was wanted to reside seven years in the solitude of a hermitage well-stored with books; and that his reward, at the end of that time, was to be, certain introduction to a career of rapid advancement to the highest offices in the Church or in the State. The offer was just to my wishes. I was preparing to set out to present myself as a Candidate for the situation, when the affair came to the ears of one of the Professors, whose seasonable advice interrupted the progress of this adventure.

But, I was more diverted and instructed, than chagrined, by those errors of abused simplicity, and by the ridicule they exposed me to. While I was the dupe of the mischievous artifice, you may be sure I suffered no pain from it. When I found it out to be an imposture practised on my simplicity, the pain of the discovery was

suppressed by the satisfaction I felt, that I had not been later in making it. The lessons which mischievous humour and ridicule thus gave, were deep impressed upon my mind, and contributed the most essentially to its improvement in common sense. That momentary offence which I could not but feel with the authors of my disgrace, was effaced from my mind, the instant they assured me, it was all a harmless joke, such as none could have a right to be offended with. Yet, upon reflexion, I secretly discovered so much more of wanton malignity, than of honest merriment in the joke, that I resolved never in life, to sport so, myself, with the ingenuous feelings of others. My emulation, too, was roused by the praise of cleverness which I heard bestowed on the wags who had so outwitted me. I resolved to keep upon my guard; and, whenever they should assail me again, to shew myself, if possible, more than a match for them at their own weapons. I succeeded in all. And you will not, I think, deny, that, so succeeding, I had much more comfort than

vexation, in the tricks the wags played off against me.

*Sen.* Would, that I had been equally fortunate! But, our friend Testy, then the very chief of the wags you mention, took a particular fancy for me, fastened himself upon me, and, under pretence of being my protector against mischievous tricks, contrived to drop a sort of slow poison into every nipperkin of sweets that Nature or Society held out to me.—But, our late conversations have restored me to myself. And, I forgive him.

*Tes.* It is true that I took delight, when a stripling at college, in such pranks of trivial mischief, as you, Chearful, have described. Equally true is it, that I first cultivated Sensitive's friendship, of purpose to make him, by the tenderness and despondency of his feelings, the frequent butt of my own wit and ironical humour.—But, to confess the truth, I have since paid too dear, a thousand times, for whatever satisfaction I had in betraying my simpler fellow-students into ridiculous vexations. That spirit gave me a habit of viewing

every thing still in the worst light, and of finding out matter of vexation to my neighbours and myself, where almost any other man would have missed it. I owe most of the miseries I complain of, to that early habit of sarcastic remark and of growling complaint, which I affected so much when I was at the University. And if I have made Sensitive now and then more tremulously uneasy, than I could have wished;—I have suffered nearly as much myself: while, every day, my unlucky discernment becomes more sharp-sighted to the detection of evils; and, every day, I am touched with the discovery in a manner approaching nearer and nearer to Sensitive's morbid sensibility. Well may my old friend forgive me. On him I have long ceased to play by irony or mischievous fiction. And, such is the force of habit; and so interesting to me are still the tenderness and plaintive gentleness of his spirit; that I should not, now, know how to forego his society and converse.

*Sen.* Enough! enough! As little should I be able to endure, for any length of

time, the want of your conversation. In future, however, let us be somewhat less industrious in using the microscope for the discovery of matters of vexation and disgust!

(C. 8.)

*Merry*. These expressions of mutual FRIENDSHIP between you, are worthy of the ingenuous integrity of your characters. FRIENDSHIP is another of those Comforts of Social Life which forbid man to fall out with his fellows, on account of any petty uneasinesses he may suffer among them. However this relation of sentiments may arise between any two persons, it can subsist only where there is a reciprocal esteem of virtues and abilities, no direct and known competition of interests, a mutual accommodation of tempers, and something congenial in knowledge, habits, and pursuits. Where these pre-requisites subsist between any two persons; and they enjoy opportunities sufficiently frequent of mutual converse; it is unavoidable, that they should be much endeared to one another. They sympathize more perfectly in

each other's feelings, than it would be possible in the relations of slighter acquaintance. They are united, every day more closely, in their interests, tastes, and pursuits. The idea of the one is, to the other, associated with almost every object of his amusement or regard. They redouble mutually to one another, for each, his powers of activity, of defence, of research, of communication, and of virtuous enjoyment of almost every species. That appetite for society with which the Author of Nature has framed us; and the disposition inherent in every one to do to others, all the good he can, without a sacrifice of his own interests, real or fancied; evince us to have been destined for friendship, as one of the highest advantages compatible with our condition. But, such would never have been our native destination, if it had not been in the very nature of the thing, that friendship should prove to us, a source of peculiar Comforts. We enter, in the very dawn of life, into that intimacy of connexion with those who are the nearest to us, which has a natural tendency to create

in our hearts, the best sentiments of friendship. Knowing the proper sentiments of kindness towards a mother, a nurse, a father, an Infant brother or sister! how can we, afterwards, avoid dispositions of friendship towards every one with whom, without having previous cause to dislike him, we fall into frequent society? Young persons, at their first entrance into general life, are passionately eager to get the friendship of every one: a plain proof, that friendship is to them an eminent source of pleasure! Indeed, society is perfected, and the ends of its existence are truely answered, only, where all the persons in it, regard one another with the affections of genuine friendship. Pass this day in converse with a stranger,—the next day, *cæteris paribus*, in the company of a friend:—on the third day, you shall be easily able to determine, to what a degree, friendship is one of the most estimable blessings of human life.

True it is, that friendship is, in the present imperfection of human nature, seldom exemplified in any very near approach to

its genuine purity, constancy, and zeal. But, even those imperfect friendships, which are common in society, prove the sources of most of its Comforts. How they animate conversation! How they enlighten, refine, and exalt every species of virtuous enjoyment! How they communicate from friend to friend, through numbers, joys which, if it were not for the sympathies of friendship, might be confined, respectively, to one or two!—Take mutual hatred and hostility between any two persons, as one extreme: let the other extreme be, between any other two persons, the perfection of friendship:—Every advance, from the hostile to the friendly extreme, is not only an increase of Comfort to the persons themselves between whom it takes place, but an improvement in their mutual usefulness to society at large.

*Sen.* What, Sir, may be your opinion of FEMALE FRIENDSHIPS?

*Merry.* Of friendships between females I know, that they are much more frequent, pure, and zealous, than it is usual for the men to allow of them.

But, I think it the supreme delicacy and the perfection of friendship, when, without any intervention of sensual love, whether lawful or licentious, there subsists an intimacy of affections, and of congenial virtue, taste, and intellect, between a man and a woman, persons of good sense and moral worth. The difference of sex leaves not room for that emulation of character and pursuits which can never be wholly extinguished between man and man. While the mutual intimacy renders them attentive to each other's wishes and interests; the sexual difference of character, with the differences of education and manners artificially superinduced upon that, enable them to judge for each other, with a trueness of discernment, which neither could so well exercise in his or her own case. They anticipate one another's wishes, and conciliate one another's humours, with an elegant and considerate delicacy, of which there is between man and man no example. There is something in the native difference of character, that the most effectually unlocks a man's bosom, and that disposes him

to pour out the whole secrets of his soul, infinitely rather to an amiable and intelligent woman, than to any friend, however valued, of his own sex. I should suppose, that the woman may incline to nearly the same preference in frank communications, in favour of the man. For myself, I will confess my weakness: *I can scarce ever be five minutes in company with a woman, whom I know to be estimable, and who favours me with her polite attention, without feeling disposed to open my heart to her, and to ask her advice, with the same ardent implicit confidence, as if it were my Guardian Angel to whom I spoke!* The consciousness of virtue between the man and the woman, in the friendship I speak of, tends to increase the attachment to the most elevated enthusiasm. The different parts which belong to them, in their mutual friendship, harmonize much more entirely, than the reciprocal good offices in the friendship between man and man. The converse of the woman gives delicacy of taste, of affection, of passion, of moral discrimination, to the man: it gives purity, facility,

and elegant lightness of phraseology and elocution: it gives that inexpressible, irresistible grace of manner, *quod nequeo monstrare, et sentio tantum!* On the other hand, the converse of the man communicates to the mind of the female, new strength of reason, new enlargement of views, a new superiority to trivial interests, and to passionate disturbance of the heart about objects unworthy of its regard, a firmer disposition to sacrifice small present to great future interests, boldness, fortitude, and, perhaps a more perfect simplicity of manner. GIBBON is no where in his works, more elegantly tender, or more truly interesting, than, when, in his Memoirs, he regrets, that he had not had a sister who might have been the domestic friend of his life, and mentions the superior perfection of a virtuous friendship between two persons different in sex, with a preference nearly similar to that with which I incline to regard it. The value of such a friendship is eminently illustrated in the account, of the correspondence between him, and his aunt and mother-in-law, and of the

manner in which he lived, when in their society.

I might quote yet another instance of a friendship, pure, exalted, and cordial, in which the strength and delicacy of the sentiment were eminently displayed. The friendship between the late Great Lord Viscount NELSON, and a Lady whose genius and virtues were the pride of the Court of Naples, as they are, now, the ornament and charm of the society in which she lives in this country; I mean Lady HAMILTON. Calumny itself has ceased to impeach the purity of that distinguished friendship. Testimony, the best informed and the most unexceptionable in integrity, vouches for its sanctity and honour. It was animated by a patriotism in which the Lady, by her influence at the Court of Naples, and by her vigilance for the interests of Britain, contributed, in a critical moment, and in a manner the most essential, to the greatest of the Hero's successes.* Its honour, no less than its delicacy,

* See Mr. HARRISON's Life of Lord NELSON.

was attested by the dying remembrances of his Lordship towards his inestimable friend, and by the nature of the bequests which he confided to her tenderness and her virtue. The justice and truth of an attestation so solemn and so high, are confirmed by the unambitious elegance of her Ladyship's life in her present retirement, by the unaffected delicacy, sanctity and graceful propriety of her manners, by that unwearied and enchanting goodness of heart with which she, without one grain of ostentation, makes herself so eminently, an angel of mercy and sweet benignity to the necessitous and deserving!

*Tes.* May Cancer consume the tongue that utters a word to the contrary!—But, if virtuous friendship between man and woman give all these felicities,—what remains to be derived from MATRIMONY?

(C. 9.)

*Chear.* Will you hear a batchelor upon this topic? or will you not rather declare the result of your own experience? We know well, that it has not been unhappy.

*Tes.* Nay! let us hear a batchelor's praise of the MARRIED STATE?

*Sen.* Ay! prithee do, Chearful! My feelings will not allow me to speak on the subject. I have known what it is to have one of the best of wives! and—alas! I have known what it is to lose her!

*Chear.* In marriage, the characters and interests of any two worthy persons whom it may unite, are more entirely identified, than in the relations of friendship merely. Such friendship as has been described, *may* exist between Man and Woman. But, it is the peculiar excellence of marriage, that its circumstances tend always to create an unity of character and interests between two persons, such as cannot take place in any of the other relations of life —The child is, a while in dependence on his parents: but, he is destined to be separated from them even at an early age, to fill his mind with associations of ideas different from theirs, to have other companions, to view as it were a new world and with different eyes, to become himself, in time, the head of a new family having

new and separate interests. The brothers and sisters, children of the same parents, have,—in their common relation to those parents, in the early society which results from that association, in their habitual acquaintance in early life with the same subjects of thought and conversation, in their being nearly of that equality of age at which we are, all, much on a level in the respects of experience or ignorance, sanguine hope, similarity of passions and pursuits, and in their having been a while in the little domestic circle, almost all the world to one another,—have a multiplicity of interesting ties to bind them inseparably in happy friendship. Nature has even done more to make them live in friendship together, than it is possible for her to accomplish in favour of any whose relations of consanguinity or affinity are reciprocally more remote. Yet, their views in life do not proceed within the same lines, are not circumscribed within the same horizon, do not terminate in one point. They are destined to different functions, different local situations,

separate family-connexions, respectively peculiar duties. Their tender affections are not to be of necessity concentered upon one another. It is in nature, that they should be gradually turned away upon other objects. It is unavoidable, that the fraternal relations, interesting and important as they are, should, by degrees, give place, to new relations of love, of friendship, of conjugal union, and of paternity. They mellow, as it were away,—somewhat—as the oil or alcohol evaporates from the fixing paint which it had served to liquefy,—as the butterfly is, in its new existence, emancipated from the relations of the caterpillar,—as the chemical elements of bodies, are gradually attracted out of one set of combinations into another.—Not such is the natural and necessary course of the connexion between husband and wife. Even the spell of love is not dissolved by their union. If it exist between them, with virtue, delicacy, personal cleanliness, and good sense,—the charm acquires continually new power,—the longer they live together, under it. Mutual kindness and

mutual partiality of esteem, are the nectar and ambrosia upon which it feeds and grows. Because the young and virtuous wife knows herself to be dearer and more amiable than all the world besides in her husband's eyes, for that very reason he is dearer and more estimable than all others in the world, to her. These interesting prepossessions tend continually to exalt and inflame one another. Even the absence of those solicitudes which are said to be of the essence of love, is not sufficient, in this case, to abate the passion. The habit of affectionate converse, of mutual sympathy, of unreserved confidence, of continually leaning, even in thought, the one upon the other, for comfort and approbation, enhances mutual endearment, more than it is possible for words to express. The feeling that they cannot find happiness but in an entire unity of affections, tastes, and interests, augments the same effect. They see nothing around them but what is the common work or choice of both. They grow together: and their very lives depend the one upon the

other,—like those of the two persons monstrously united from the birth, in one,—or like the Hamadryad and her oak. The more important, and the more interesting to hope and fear, the objects of their common regard; so much the more is their conjugal attachment cemented. Children, —the pledges of their married endearments, wards committed by Providence, to their common tenderness, prudence, and good faith,—by engaging them incessantly in offices of fond and virtuous attention to the same dear objects, still heighten their mutual love. As their children grow up, leave them, and are dispersed in the world; they find themselves left in a great measure, alone; and are again as it were, all in all to each other. Afflictions, and indisposition of health, endear them to each other's sympathy: Common cares contribute equally to confirm the constancy and fervour of their attachment: and even common joys serve rather to promote their mutual love, and dependence of mind on one another, than to betray them to reciprocal indifference. On the last verge of

existence, they become solicitous each not to be left in this world behind the other.— Such is the natural effect of the conjugal union, where its happy effects are not counteracted by vices in the parties, such as do not necessarily spring from, or accompany marriage. But, even under all the disadvantages of the ignorance and vices of humanity, I will venture to affirm, that, in the married union are to be found the truest attachments, the highest and the most refined social comforts, of which there is any example among men. It cannot give to vice and ignorance, all the advantages of virtue. But, it often, by enlightening ignorance, and by reforming vice, raises the person whom they debased, to a felicity of which he must, otherwise, have remained incapable.

*Merry.* Enough, enough of matrimony! But, prithee, Chearful! let us hear, also, your Sentiments of LOVE? Is not love, also, one of the Comforts of Life? Sure, you can tell! you who, almost ever since your days of frocks and petticoats,

have been dying of love for one Princess or another?

*Chear.* Nay, this is too much! Why should I engross all the conversation, or have it put upon me to make so many of the most delicate explanations?

*Tes.* Oh! you shall not deny us, Mr. Chearful! You have said so much for marriage, of which you have had *no experience,* that I cannot doubt but you will speak handsomely in favour of Love, of which I begin to suspect, that you must have had a *great deal.*

*Chear.* A great deal, truly! Perhaps, too much! He who fondly admires the felicity of the married state, has known much of love, and is, yet unmarried, must surely have been most luckless in his courtships!—

*Sen.* On that head you shall not be too closely questioned! But, do, oblige us with your sentiments of Love, as one of the Comforts or Miseries of Social Life?

(C. 10.)

*Chear.* Well, Gentlemen! you will have it so: and you shall be obeyed!—

I begin with excluding from the character of Love, that mere sensual appetite which shuns the alliance of reason or sentiment. It is not Love that fills our houses with pollution, and our streets with haggard and squalid forms, the furies of licentiousness, the ghosts of departed innocence and beauty. It is not Love that engages the silly and the vain, young men and young women, mutually to set their caps and frizzle their tops, at one another, for the sake merely of trying to trepan each the other into a passion which neither has a soul to feel. It is not love that betrays young men and women into one another's arms at the command of narrow-minded parents, without sufficient previous acquaintance, without predilection or preference, "loveless, joyless, unendeared." Nor shall I allow it to be love that brings together gawky boys and girls, at the impulse of appetite,—under the influence of

capricious levity,—from momentary fondness for the same follies—but such a predilection for trifles and follies, that neither will sacrifice the slightest particle of his or her partialities to the wishes of the other,—and with so very little of true mutual affection, that they are, within the first fortnight of their cohabitation, reciprocally indifferent,—and before the Honey-Moon is at an end, sick of one another to loathing. As little is it to be called Love that brings old maids and batchelors together upon views of convenience and selfish comfort, which are perpetually disappointed. It is not Love, but appetite, folly, impotence of imagination and desire, unnatural and contemptible, which prompts old men of sixty years to take to their arms misses of fifteen, or which makes dowagers of seventy to doat upon young rakes of five and twenty.

Yet, in all these cases, there is some infusion of the sentiment of Love. And, so far as there is any approach to it,—there is Comfort,—there is some approach to the knowledge of true felicity.

LOVE, the sentiment which is to me, the grand charm of social life, derives, *unconsciously*, from undepraved *sensual feeling*, that quality by which it is primarily distinguished from the refined, exalted friendship between Man and Woman, that has been already mentioned in our conversation. The *Taste* for the *Beautiful*, which we are, from the earliest infancy, continually acquiring by the exercise of our judgment, in the discrimination between agreeable and more agreeable figures, colours, and forms, adds its aid to compose the charm. The love of the *mental qualities* of virtue, taste, lively genius, mild kind affections, delicate propriety of sentiment and action, contributes more than any admiration of mere personal aspect, to kindle the passion of True Love, and to exalt it to enthusiasm and rapture. Our respect is such for the sentiments of others, that, to give all its power to genuine Love,—it is necessary that the Lover should be persuaded, that others view the object of his fondness with all his partiality.—He must, likewise, think it pos-

sible for him to win the favour of the woman he loves, or, having already won, to retain it,—but this not without incessant care, *to attain* every merit of manners, virtues, talents, and appearance, that can adorn him as a man.

It is not indispensible, that the Lover should judge aright, or even nearly right, in ascribing all these excellencies to his mistress. It is enough, that he actually *believe* her to possess them,—and that, in his estimate, just or imaginary, of her worth and beauty, there be no qualities included, which are not truly and independently elegant and good. It is necessary, that the sensual influence should still exist, but should operate only by the mystic union between soul and body, without making itself ever a subject of distinct reflexion in the Lover's mind. It is not necessary, that the Lover and his mistress should be of the same, or very nearly of the same age. It is, perhaps, the most favourable to the fervour and the refinement of the passion, that the Lover

should be even more than a very few years older than his mistress.—It is just fit, that both should have advanced beyond the age of puberty:—that neither should have lived to an age at which the health and vigour of the frame are in decline; at which tenderness of feeling and vivacity of fancy are impaired; at which the Man may no longer hope to distinguish himself, by those excellencies which are in man the most interesting to soft and elegant, and, at the same time, to manly and generous society:—that the bloom, the freshness, the delicacy of the Lady's personal charms, should not yet have begun to disappear; and that her timid modesty, her sprightly vivacity, her pitying gentleness, her airy gaiety, should still appear in the happiest combination with her firmness of spirit, and her inflexible propriety of good sense.

Such is that LOVE which, perhaps, with some delusion of fancy, I have learned to regard, as the most exalted and the most refined of all the Comforts of Human Life. It is not so much his mistress, as

*virtue* and *excellence* personified, that the Lover loves. The very fixing of his heart, his fancy, his understanding, upon the constant dream of such excellence, keeps him in exquisite delight. It tends, irresistibly to purify his mind from every unworthy sentiment, and to withhold it from the power of every polluting, debasing influence. Its very solicitudes are charming; since hope soon loses its spring, without fear; since fear quickly loses its own existence after it has annihilated hope; since, in the mutual play of these sentiments, the one still prompts to useful energy, the other still gives a delicious foretaste of joy. Nothing gives taste, and power of generous exertion, and the divine felicities of genius, and the grace and the manliness of virtue, like the true Love which makes it the Lover's sole ambition to win the favour and possession of an object, in which he fancies every excellence, and which he hopes to obtain only by rising to kindred excellence in himself. No! never was any generous or truly great act performed; never was

any thing interestingly amiable exhibited among mankind; but through the inspiration, either of a love of abstract, unpersonified excellence, or the love of a woman in whom all excellence was imagined to be exemplified. It is this passion that, crowned by marriage, gives the golden felicity of the married state.—It is this passion, that, even, if unfortunate, still rewards itself by the noble and virtuous sentiments which it has wrought into the very texture of the soul!

*Tes.* I *must* interrupt you. Our conversation has been prolonged beyond the convenience of my appointments.

*Sen.* I fear we cannot, all, meet for some months. To-morrow, I go upon an excursion into Wales.

*Merry.* Oh! we have not explained to you, a thousandth part of the COMFORTS OF LIFE. How exquisite are the Comforts of the LIBRARY—of the SNUG FIRESIDE of one's HOME—of the Table of TEMPERANCE! Oh! it would make your hearts warm to rapture, fairly to think of them. What COMFORTS are appropriated to every stage in the progress of Human Life—to

INFANCY—YOUTH—MANHOOD—GREEN OLD AGE—and even to that last period of protracted LIFE, when it has been fancied, that MAN must necessarily pass into a STRULDBRUGG! What COMFORTS in DULLNESS! How divine the joys of GENIUS! How genuine, how serene the Comforts of RELIGION! How does COMFORT still break out from the very bosom of Misery! How impossible it is for all the Malice of Misery to snatch irretrievably from Man, one genuine joy! When JOVE had bestowed on man every blessing which Nature presents; and was returning to Heaven;—he cast one look back upon his new-born favourite. It seemed to his tenderness, that something more might yet be bestowed.—He gave him, to crown the whole, the POWER of LAUGHTER, and the SENSE of the RIDICULOUS!

THE END.

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